

The Watch-Tower.

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THE WATCH-TOWER.

GETHSEMANE.

BY THE REV. CAPEL MOLYNEUX, B.A.

“GETHSEMANE” speaks for itself. No one can doubt the point and purpose with such a heading; “the Man of sorrows,” in the hour of His passion, stands forth at once, and almost exclusively, before the mind’s eye.

“*The Man of sorrows!*” This, then, is the subject discussed and attempted to be exhibited. Is this subject sufficiently considered? Is the man Christ Jesus—is the humanity of Christ, sufficiently considered and sufficiently appreciated,—that He was bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; possessed of all our feelings, sensibilities, and sympathies; made in all things, sin only excepted, like unto His human brethren? We glory in the divinity of Christ, that He was God, God of God, very God of very God; and we do well. We abhor Socinianism, or aught in thought or theory that impugns the coequality of the Son with the Father, or robs Him of honour coequal with that of the Father; and we do well. But may we not, in this righteous jealousy for His divinity, possibly overlook somewhat of the integrity and claim of His humanity, and in so doing overlook also just that which not only renders that divinity available in all its perfection to our souls’ salvation, but also that which, to human feelings, involves the very essence of attractiveness in Messiah’s character? For wherein does that attractiveness consist but in the fact that Christ was our brother; that a fellow-feeling of the truest, the veriest nature exists between us; that He actually reciprocates all our experience, participating in the same, weeping with those who weep, and rejoicing with those who rejoice? It is assuredly in this, in the sympathy of Jesus, that we exult; it is in

this that we behold His supreme attractiveness, His irresistible claim to our souls' affection: but wherein consists the very capacity for the existence of this sympathy but in His humanity? He feels *with* man because, and only because, He himself is man!

The Humanity of Christ! It cannot be too attentively considered, too deeply prized. GETHSEMANE brings it prominently to view. *There*, if anywhere, is Jesus exhibited in His personal human experience; in every circumstance and incident which there transpired, which marked that spot and characterized that "hour," it is the humanity of Christ that is brought into exercise, the humanity of Christ that is pre-eminently developed and prominently displayed. The beginning of sorrows, the thrice repeated prayer, the remonstrance, the betrayal, the surrender, the desertion, one and all tell of the "Man of sorrows;" and we may almost say of Him exclusively, of none but Him. Excepting the announcement that "more than twelve legions of angels" awaited His command, and the amazing fact that when He proclaimed to His enemies who He was, "they went backward, and fell to the ground," no intimation is afforded throughout Gethsemane's history of Christ's divinity; and, for aught that appears, none would know that the Sufferer there ranked beyond a perfect human being, or surmise that in that body—so humbled, so agonized, yet so patient, so submissive—dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily, yea, "God over all, blessed for ever!"

That the subject of Christ's humanity is not unattended with considerable difficulty, and is liable, perhaps beyond other subjects, to misapprehension, might seem probable even from its own peculiar nature; but painful proof is also afforded of this in the manifold errors, not to say heresies, into which many, in attempting its discussion, have unhappily fallen: yet it follows not therefore that its investigation is to cease, or the subject itself to be precluded from our consideration and study. Surely not. It only follows that we who are instructors be more careful to derive our knowledge exclusively from the fountain of light, and that ye who are seeking instruction be less careful to make "a man an offender for a word;" and then we may hope that, despite the difficulty of the subject and the danger of its discussion, still shall truth be developed, and the ineffable beauty and attractiveness, the grace and tenderness, of Him who was the "Man of sorrows" shall, by the grace of God on our humble endeavours, be in some little measure brought to light, and commended to the devout affection of His loving people.

There was a crisis in the history of our Lord and Saviour's earthly career which was clear and marked,—marked unmistakably by Himself, and characterized by Himself with its own peculiar and distinctive appellation; He called it "THE HOUR!" It was in reference to this crisis that He said, "Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say?

Father, save me from this hour ;” and again, in reference to the same, that when about to pour forth His heart in His last prayer for His people, He made the announcement, “Father, the hour is come !”

This crisis, or “hour,” dreaded as it was by reason of its attendant and ineffable sufferings, was nevertheless desired by Christ in His inmost soul, by reason of the achievement it should involve. Thus He spake:—“I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished !” On this point His mind seems to have been ever and intently fixed. He never lost sight of it. It was for this, indeed, that, as declared by Himself in the passage already quoted, He endured to the end: “For this cause came I to this hour ;” as it was for this, indeed, that a body was prepared for Him in the beginning—a body wherein and whereby He might be susceptible of the sufferings of that hour, and thus, finishing transgression and making an end of sin, bring in an everlasting salvation for an otherwise lost and perishing world.

Betwixt the announcement of this crisis, or “hour,” and its actual commencement, there was an interval in the Saviour’s history—a calm or lull, for so we may call it, exceedingly interesting and affecting. It was a period, though but short, of entire separation, on His part, from the unbelieving and ungodly world around Him, and of uninterrupted and exclusive fellowship with His own, His true and faithful disciples: the traitor was then gone out from among them, and none remained with Christ but the eleven alone.

Shortly after the announcement that His “hour” was come, in John xii. 23, and immediately in connection with the reiteration of the same in John xiii. 1, we have the incident recorded of washing the disciples’ feet, at the close of which the Lord dismisses Judas, admonishing him, by means of the sop, of the tremendous act he was about to perpetrate, and accompanying the admonition with the significant injunction, “That thou doest, do quickly.” Judas, we are told, “went immediately out ;” and Jesus, left alone with the eleven, having uttered the triumphant exclamation, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him,” proceeded at once to pour forth His soul in the surpassing lessons of wisdom and comfort, together with the unequalled prayer, found in the immediately succeeding chapters of the same Gospel. This was the interval, the calm or lull; a period, no doubt, of exceeding enjoyment and refreshment to His own soul, so appropriate and so much needed on the eve of the commencement of that terrible “**HOUR.**”

Now it was, when these discourses were concluded, or, as the Scripture says, “when Jesus had spoken these words,” that He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into which He entered, and His disciples. And then it was, as we believe, that the crisis in question actually had its beginning; then

sounded forth the first stroke of that "hour," of which, even in His eventful and "afflicted" life, no parallel, for interest or suffering, had as yet been realized.

He cometh to Gethsemane! Yes, and full well did He know all that awaited Him there; open and naked were all things before Him; not a drop in the "cup," not an ingredient in its mixture, but He knew altogether,—the power of darkness and its terrible pressure; the agony and bloody sweat; the betrayal of Judas; the desertion by his disciples;—all, all was before Him, as though depicted in a map; yet "He cometh," despite it all, "He cometh!" nothing doubting, nothing hesitating, "*He cometh to Gethsemane!*"

And He knew the place, and He knew it well. Oft had He resorted thither, oft for prayer and communion with God! For prayer; yes, it was a place of prayer, and therefore also a place of safety. Mark this well—prayer and safety are inseparably linked together: make every place a place of prayer, and you make every place a place of safety. Temptation may still come, as come it will, but fearlessly then you may meet it; Satan falls before God; temptation is powerless against prayer. Jesus knew this, and therefore the place of prayer was chosen by Him as the place where temptation, in its direct form, should be permitted to assail Him.

Gethsemane was a garden. A garden! How does man's lot, man's interest, seem associated, well-nigh bound up, with a garden! In a garden it was that he was created; in a garden it was that he was primarily placed; there did he realize his original perfection; and there did he lose it! The garden of Eden! what thoughts, what reminiscences, are stirred up in the soul at the very mention of its name! The garden of Eden! What was man originally in that garden? What did man subsequently become there? Like God in the first instance; like Satan in the second! Yes, so it was; modify and explain away the matter as we may, nevertheless the truth remains. Man was made in the image of God; and man, by listening to temptation, substituted for God's image the image of the tempter. He fell!—fell from light to darkness, from purity to pollution, from a state of perfection to one of ruin, from Heaven's brightness in destiny, to Hell's blackness in desert! He fell, and "God drove out the man!" The garden of Eden was no longer his!

Adam fell! But, behold, another Adam, a second Man, is prepared to remedy and rectify the catastrophe of the first; and another garden is ready for his reception. And again, not at the commencement, but at the close of his life, is man called to enter it; and again is the tempter, ever the same as before, to ply his power and exercise his subtlety; and again is man—this second Man, the head and representative of His own peculiar race—to enter the lists, and peril the encounter; and again is all of human hope and human prospect to be staked on

the issue! A garden still, yes, a garden still the scene of action; a garden still the place of trial; a garden still the arena of desperate conflict; a garden still the battle-field, where hell's united host shall make assault on the workmanship of God! Therefore He cometh;—for so it must needs be,—therefore “He cometh to a place called Gethsemane,” a place “where was a garden;” and in that garden is to be enacted a scene which, for interest and importance, is, if possible, unrivalled even by the history of Eden itself. It was well, it was needful, then, that He went to the garden. Let us bless God and be thankful that He did so. But He went not alone thither; others went with Him. We proceed to consider who they were. The eleven, it appears, all accompanied Christ into the garden; but when there He took three to be with Him as His immediate companions; these were Peter, James, and John. To the eight He said, “Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder;” to the three, “Tarry ye here, and watch with Me.”

These three apostles were evidently privileged, even beyond and above the rest. Specially were they chosen to behold the glory, the power, and the agony of their Lord, as manifested respectively in the spectacles of the transfiguration, the resurrection of Jairus's daughter, and the suffering in the garden. Difficult it is to say in which of these cases—of the first and last, at least—the greatest honour and greatest privilege was conferred upon them. To see the glory, as they did see it, on the “holy mount,” how entrancing, how overwhelming! It “was good indeed to be there;” but yet to be called to the fellowship of His sufferings, even as witnesses and watchers; to be with Him and near Him in the time of His agony and bloody sweat, what shall we say of this? What estimate can we form of such a distinction, such an honour? But we need not compare or contrast these things. We need not question or consider which was the greater privilege. They who were called to the one participated in the other; and so it is, and ever will be. The mount and the valley are rarely, if ever, disunited, at least in regard to the visitors of either. The most exalted experience is essentially connected with the deepest humiliation; to follow Christ in His temptation is the way to follow Him in His glory; and they whom He designs to behold Him in the latter He infallibly takes as His associates in the former.

But the companions:—why any companions on this occasion? Why take Peter, and James, and John, or any, to be with Him then? Various reasons, no doubt, might be assigned for this—all-sufficient reasons; but the obvious, and, as I believe, primary and real reasons were—*the Edification that the scene should involve to His companions and the Comfort their presence and sympathy should involve to Him.*

Christ has, by the assumption of the nature of man, and by the work done in that nature, so identified Himself with humanity, that He is

literally no longer independent of it—of it, not only as appertaining to Himself *personally*, but also *officially*. He is now head of the human redeemed body; and as the body cannot say to the head, I have no need of you, so neither can the head say to the body, I have no need of you. Oh no! He has need, great need, of us: His heart's affections are bound up with us; He loves us with an intensity of love inexpressible; our every interest is His own interest; our every feeling is His own feeling; if we are hurt, He is hurt; if we are happy, He is happy; if we rejoice in His love, He rejoices in ours; if His sympathy is precious to us, our sympathy is likewise, even now, now that He is in heaven's highest glory—for there is He still in humanity—precious to Him; and how much more so then, as we may safely judge, when on earth's highway, as “a Man of sorrows,” or in Gethsemane's garden, as a Man of agony, He said to His disciples, His chosen three, “Tarry ye here, and watch with Me”! It was for His own comfort, as well as for the edification and benefit of the disciples themselves, that the Lord took with Him into the garden, and to the very scene of His agony, Peter, and James, and John. Other reasons, no doubt, weighed in His own mind, but these are obvious to us, and they are abundantly sufficient.

And now let us contemplate the experience of Jesus himself at the outset of His passion: “He began to be sorrowful and very heavy.” *Began to be!* but how so? Had He not been so already? had not His life been a life of sorrow?—when had He been free from it? Surely sorrow had been His portion all the day long; even from Bethlehem up to that moment it had been bound up with His very existence. Yes, undoubtedly so; but there was a crisis in His existence, a crisis or turning-point, when sorrow such as even He—the Man of sorrows—had as yet been a stranger to was to begin. All hitherto realized had been but the sparks from the furnace; now was the furnace itself, heated even as God's wrath to the uttermost alone could heat it, to be encountered; all yet but the droppings from the cloud, significant indeed, and fearful enough, but now was the cloud itself about to burst, and the fiery storm and tempest about to be let go, in all its fury, on His devoted head. The “*HOUR*” was come—the “*hour*” so noted, so terrible, so dreaded, yet so inevitable and essential in order to the accomplishment of His work—that “*hour*” was come, and with it the commencement of the crisis;—“He began to be sorrowful and very heavy:” nor did it close; nay, verily, but rather did it, in all its appalling circumstances and characteristics, continue to gather strength, till all was expended that the vials of wrath contained, and the justice of God denounced against offending man; till the Substitute for a world's sin, the voluntary Victim for human transgression, had cried from the accursed tree, “It is finished,” and gave up the ghost.

The sufferings of Christ were of course, and of necessity must have been, in many respects infinitely mysterious, and infinitely beyond human conception and comprehension. The very nature of Christ would itself even seem to involve this,—not His divine nature, but the perfection of His human: His perfection in this respect, physical and moral, would itself involve a kind and degree of sensibility, both as to physical and moral experience, which would place the subject of it at an infinite and unapproachable distance from sinful man, and cause that experience to be at a proportionate distance too. Besides, let it be remembered that Christ, when smitten, was smitten as a Son by a Father, Himself loving and being Himself beloved beyond all expression. How is it possible for man to enter into this? How is it possible for man, sinful man, man full of evil and enmity—how is it possible for such a one to appreciate the feelings of Christ when smitten of God?—to comprehend what those feelings must have been when, at the moment that the blows fell upon Him, He was, and knew that He was, the beloved Son, in whom the Father was well pleased? Ah, no! we know—we can know—nothing really about it; His sufferings, as to their actual experience, their intensity, must be for ever hidden from our perception; and all we can do is to skim the surface of the ocean into which He plunged, and observe the appearance and external circumstances, as it were, of the fiery ordeal to which He was subjected. This we will endeavour to do; and for our help, much information, valuable and deeply affecting, is afforded in the record of Christ's history.

The sufferings of Christ, viewed as to their origin, both in a moral and physical sense, were the result exclusively of external causes; as it was the sin of others, and not His own sin, which morally induced His sufferings, so was it the agency of others, and not His own agency—or the working of His own conscience, or of any internal principle at all—which *instrumentally inflicted* His sufferings. The agency through which and by which Christ's sufferings were inflicted was threefold,—*the agency of God, the agency of man, and the agency of the devil*. These three agencies were at work, directly or indirectly, simultaneously or separately, during the whole of His earthly career,—at work in regard to His sufferings, producing those sufferings, and incessantly accumulating those sufferings upon Him.

Christ was a sin offering; He became sin for us, and subjected Himself therefore to sin, in all its liabilities and penalties. Now sin arms all creation against its subject; heaven and earth and hell are all at one here; they are all united in this—though in nothing else,—that the sinner shall find no friend in either, no help, no sympathy, no comfort. God's blessing brings with it universal blessings; God's curse carries with it universal curse. When God smites, creation must

not only assent, but co-operate too. Tremendous truth! but truth it is, as will be found and understood by-and-bye, and for ever, in hell. The soul in hell—the creature, both body and soul, the inmate of hell—will look in vain above, and below, and around on every side, for one particle of alleviation or aid; nay, in vain for exemption from the attacks and positive destroying and agonizing influence, so far as it can be exercised, of any and all other existing beings whatever. God will smite, and fellows will smite. Where the curse is, the subject is, and must be abhorrent to all. Sin is odious, necessarily and essentially so, even in the sight of every intelligent being. A sinner may love a sinner, but not for his sin, any further at least than that that sin may minister to his pleasure and advantage. The sin itself is not attractive, is not loved by the fellow-sinner. Sin, sin itself, is a principle of hostility, not only essentially so to its subject, but actually so to all other beings throughout the universe. The law of God contemplates universal concord and universal good; sin, which is a transgression of the law, of necessity militates against all concord and all good. It is a direct attack on universal well-being, and is, therefore, the converse of concord and good; it is, in fact and in operation, nothing else than a moral and intelligent being seeking his own supposed self-interest at the cost and damage of all others—whether God or man—in the universe of being. Look at the law, look at the commandments, in the transgression of which sin consists. In breaking the first table the sinner seeks to deify himself at the cost of the honour, and name, and glory of God; in breaking the second the sinner seeks to enrich and gratify himself at the cost of the life, or honour, or substance of his neighbour. *This is sin!* It is essentially odious, and must itself be odious in the estimation of all who witness it. Whatever I may be myself, I must still hate that which is thus necessarily directed in itself and influence against myself. Impossible to be otherwise! and so therefore will it be in hell. And as no distinction will there be observable, or actually exist, between sin and the sinner,—as both will be one,—so each person there will be, and be seen to be, sin personified, and consequently each person will absolutely hate, and be absolutely hated by, all the rest! As a fact, an unquestionable, demonstrable fact, each inmate of hell will stand forth an odious, a hated being, by all other beings in the universe at large; and as an equally certain fact, each being in hell will be the subject of universal assault. God will smite in judgment and righteous wrath; and devils and fellows will smite in hatred and incurable malice. Oh! terrible thought, desperate prospect for the sinner in hell! and no less terrible thought and desperate prospect in reference to Him who became the sinner's substitute, and so volunteered to the uttermost in His own person the sinner's portion. So it was with Him of whom we speak; and this

is the key to His sufferings—sufferings as inflicted by all creation, by God from heaven, by man on earth, by devils from hell! Creation was set in array against Him, and the shafts from universal being fell upon Him; the history from Bethlehem to Calvary throughout proclaims and demonstrates this. However, the grand proof was reserved for the experience of that “hour” which closed His earthly existence, and to the beginning of which our attention is now directed.

Now it is observable that, however the different agencies through which, and by means of which, the sufferings of Christ were inflicted, operated in a greater or less degree collectively, during the whole of His earthly career; or however true that, in a certain sense and to a certain degree, there was no moment, as we suppose, from Bethlehem to Calvary, during which it may not be assumed that the curse of God, the ill-will of man, and the malignity of the devil, were resting on, and in exercise against, Him; yet it is no less true that there were times when a comparative cessation in the operation of some of these agencies is observable, and times also when some of these agencies seem to have wrought with distinctive personality and peculiar force: Gethsemane and Calvary, at least, present instances of this. Different powers seem to have prevailed on these occasions; and each, in its turn, to have exercised an intensity of influence hitherto unprecedented in the Saviour’s history. On both occasions man’s agency for evil is discernible enough: in Gethsemane, in the cold and heartless neglect, and betrayal, and desertion of the Lord; on Calvary, in the actual crucifixion of Christ, and in the taunt and the raillery, by wicked hands and wicked tongues! But in regard to the invisible agencies of God himself, and of Satan himself, the distinction is evident. *On Calvary it was God*, God himself, God the Father, who smote the Saviour, who unsheathed the sword, and demanded and required its exercise against “the man who was His fellow!” Then it was that the finishing stroke was put to the expiatory work; and that the whole weight and consummation of the curse fell upon Him. That was God’s part of the hour, if we may so say, God’s time for afflicting Him and putting Him to grief,—grief to which, we believe, all that had gone before, even in Gethsemane, bore no shadow of a comparison! But *Gethsemane was Satan’s hour*; and the sufferings of that occasion will be found, I think, mainly and distinctly traceable to his agency, as Jesus implied and taught when, at the close of Gethsemane’s history, He said, “This is your hour, and the power of darkness.” Besides, it is evident that He was not at this time under the full bearing of the curse, and in that experimental banishment from God’s presence which the curse implies. He was then heard by His Father, and answered, too, by direct communication and suitable support;—“Angels came and ministered

to Him." No; we think that in the garden, and during the whole of the period of the passion there, it was Satan, the powers of darkness, whereby He was agonized and so deeply tried. The beginning of His sorrow was through him.

What was this sorrow? It is said, "He began to be sorrowful and very heavy;" and again, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." The strongest expressions possible are these, as descriptive of internal grief and distress: consternation, amazement, anguish, overwhelming affliction, are all implied! "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Such sorrow as is well-nigh sufficient to induce death, to be itself akin to death; such sorrow as that, if continued or augmented, must at once resolve itself into death;—death is the next step! Or "sorrowful" in the anticipation of death—of such a death as awaits Me; My soul is overwhelmed in view of that which is before Me. This I believe to be the meaning especially; the essence of His sorrow *then* was the prospect of what was before Him; the sorrow of death that then came upon Him was the vision of Calvary, in itself so tremendous, in its prospect so near! Who shall tell, who conceive, what this vision must have involved? Clear, distinct, certain,—all naked and open before Him, all even of the experience which Gethsemane was to bring, and all of Calvary's final realities, from the anticipation of which Gethsemane's experience was to arise: the hall of Pilate—the mockings and scourgings—the crown of thorns—the way to the cross—the cross uplifted, and HIMSELF thereon—the hour after hour—the exhaustion—the thirst—the vinegar and myrrh—the inconceivable, mysterious work of expiation, when the soul as well as the body should agonize under the curse—the curse in all its intensity and fulness outpoured upon Him—the entire desertion by His Father, as yet unknown—for never before had this been realized, not even when all others forsook Him and fled; for then, or in reference to that very time, He said, "Ye shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." But not so at the moment—the moment on Calvary—now referred to: no; then must God, even the Father, forsake Him, utterly forsake Him, for such is the essence and bitterness of the curse! And this it was, the desertion of the Father, with all else of His prospective woe outstretched in vision before Him, seen in its naked and terrible reality, no intervening distance scarcely to modify and soften the prospect,—this it was, as we suppose, which now so pressed upon Him, and which elicited the confession, whilst it mainly and actually constituted the experience therein involved, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."

But what, it may be asked, had this to do with "the power of darkness"? or how, according to this view, is the experience in the garden—"the beginning of sorrows"—to be particularly associated

with the agency of Satan? Probably thus:—that this appalling prospect was kept vividly before the Redeemer's mind,—painted, too, in its strongest and darkest colours, by Satanic power, just as, in the wilderness, scenes of surpassing earthly attraction and glory were, by the same power, presented to His view; and by means of their allurements His integrity assailed, and His purpose tested. Satan had power, in that first temptation, thus to ply his art, and thus to attempt to influence the Saviour; he had power to raise up spectacles, or in some way to present realities, in the most glowing form, even so that he showed to Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,” and, by virtue of the same, to attempt His seduction from the path of obedience, and from the work of redemption. Just so here, I suppose, Satan had power to present and keep fixedly and terribly before the Saviour's mind the frightful realities awaiting Him on Calvary; and not only so, but, in addition to this, to suggest, with the utmost force, the alternative at hand, the escape within reach, the twelve legions of angels, who only awaited His call to transport Him, in a moment of time, beyond the boundary of this miserable world, and deliver Him at once and for ever from the woe which was before Him—from the ocean of suffering on the brink of which He then stood.

Such an alternative, be it remembered, had once before been suggested by Satanic ingenuity. Peter, who, on the occasion of the Lord's predicting His coming death, exclaimed, “This be far from Thee,” was but the agent of Satan—dexterously employed for the carrying out of his purpose,—as Jesus taught when He said, in reply, “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto Me,” thus identifying Peter, in reference to that particular act, with the person of the evil one; or determining, at least, that it was at the instigation of the evil one that such a proposition as the exclamation involved was then made. And thus, no doubt, in the garden, the influence of the power of darkness was directed to the same end—to deter the Saviour from the path of suffering, and so therewith from the path of duty! “*This shall not be unto Thee*,” or, at least, *This need not be unto Thee*, was, peradventure, the suggestion,—Thou mayest readily escape! Behold the fire and the wood; but God can provide Himself with another sacrifice! Or, at all events, look up and behold twelve legions of angels: angels charged with the care of Thee stand ready to do Thy bidding! Speak and be free—one word only, and death, and the power of hell, to which Thou art now pledged, are escaped for ever!

Such, we believe, or something akin to it, was the part played by the power of darkness in the garden of Gethsemane; and such—in some little measure—the sore trial, the deep temptation, to which Jesus was there exposed. This it was which elicited the affecting

and heart-rending confession, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" and this it was, therefore, as we believe, which mainly constituted the BEGINNING OF HIS SORROWS.

Beyond this, for the present, we shall not go; yet surely we have now abundantly sufficient for our meditation and improvement. We may, indeed, "tarry here," as the disciples were bid to do, and think awhile. What has been said will bear reflection: the garden of Gethsemane is not to be hurried through; it is a sacred enclosure, and step by step must it be trod, with sacred purpose and solemn pause. Let us, then, tarry here, tarry at the entrance, and ponder on, and apply to ourselves, the things we have already seen and already heard.

See our debt! It was for us, *all* for us, all He suffered, all He did, each drop in the cup, each sorrow as it came and thickened upon Him,—it was all for us. Wondrous thought! *For us!* "My soul," said Jesus, "is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." It was *for us!* Our sin it was, our folly and worldliness, our frivolities and rebellions, the sins of our youth and the sin of our manhood, the sin of our hearts and the sin of our lives—this it was then that pressed on His soul, that extorted the bitter cry, the touching expression of what was within Him and what was before Him! It was *our* sin! For in Him was no sin, and in Him, therefore, no cause of death at all: the cause was in others, the cause was in *us!* May our souls consider what they owe unto Him!—what is their infinite obligation to the Saviour of sinners!

See our duty! It is to witness His agony: to this were the disciples called, or why were they taken? To this, also, are we called, or why is that agony recorded? The record is clear, the visit to Gethsemane is detailed; each step He took, step by step deeper in agony, each is recorded, and the things that are written are written for us! This, then, is written for us, written for our benefit, written for our profit, written for our souls' very health and preservation; written to induce real abstraction, salutary and heartfelt abstraction, from the overwhelming power of this world's interests, and the exercise—at times and seasons, at least—of solemn thought and devout meditation! Verily, this is what we want, what we almost perish for lack of,—solemn thought and devout meditation! Default of this it is that our religion dwindles into the merest form, and profession becomes an empty name,—solemn thought and devout meditation! But then there must be materials, subject matter, to induce these, whereon they are to fix, whereby they may be elicited; and *here* surely, here if anywhere in the whole Bible, we have such materials, such subject matter—*here*, in the garden of Gethsemane! What, apart from Calvary, in Christ's own history, is equal to Gethsemane?—equal to it in interest,—comparable with it in importance? Oh, then, let us avail ourselves of it—let us profit

by it—let us improve it! Let us turn aside from all else, and visit this place; let us retire a little from the world and all around us, and, in solemn thought and devout meditation, watch with Him who there so agonized, so intensely suffered for us! To this we are assuredly called, if we will; yes, assuredly, in spirit and truth, it is said to us, and said by Him who once so spake to the favoured three, “Tarry ye here, and watch with Me.”

See our prospect! For that garden points on to another. Eden abused led to Gethsemane; Gethsemane improved leads back to Eden,—yes, and to a better garden than Eden itself could ever boast. So was it in Christ’s case: the anguish of Gethsemane opened the way—over Calvary, it is true, but opened the way to the glory of paradise. Trod, as it was, in patient endurance and uncompromising submission to His Father’s will, it introduced this “Man of sorrows,” at last a mighty Conqueror, into the realms of endless bliss; and trod, if it be, by us in a like spirit—a spirit of humble resignation, a spirit of simple faith in the agony there endured, and heartfelt devotedness to Him who there preceded us—without doubt to the same end shall we at last be led, to the same “building of God” shall we at last be brought! Yes, fellowship with Him in *suffering*, and then fellowship with Him in glory; followers of Him in His earthly pilgrimage, and then followers of Him in His heavenly heritage,—as He said, “If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be.” Paradise then, oh! what a paradise, then, awaits us! There are “rivers of pleasure, and joy for evermore;” for there is “the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal;” and there is “the tree of life,” which beareth its fruit month by month; “and there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him;” and there “shall they see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads;” and there shall be “no need of candle, or even of light of the sun, to shine therein; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever!” But is this paradise the garden to which Gethsemane points, and into which Gethsemane’s sufferings and Gethsemane’s sorrows have opened the way? Oh, then, let us be visitors of the latter, if by any means thus we be travellers to the former; let us be content, indeed, to know, and sympathize too, in all that is possible of the one, if so be that it only help us forward towards the attainment of the other. Yea, let us, at any conceivable cost of sacrifice and suffering, seek to be included among those to whom Jesus will say, at the great and quickly coming day, “Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations;” and to whom will then be fulfilled the promises, that, having “suffered with Him, they shall be also glorified together.”

CHARLIE.

HE was our pet. I used to think
 My husband so proud of Charlie!
 When the dark shadow cross'd his brow,
 And he put me aside with a quick "Not now;"—
 When my thoughts were sad, and my heart would sink,
 To whom could I go but Charlie?

How soon he learnt to read my heart,
 My thoughtful, loving boy, Charlie!
 I have seen the fiery flash in his eye
 At the harsh word causing his mother's sigh,—
 Ever so ready to take my part—
 My brave little champion, Charlie.

I clung to the hope through all, so long!
 That he loved me and loved our Charlie,
 That the blow came sudden and hard when I read
 That he, my darling, my husband, had fled;
 The thoughts of my mind and heart went wrong—
 I had cursed him but for my Charlie.

"Bless you, my boy, for coming now—
 I have only you now," I said; "Charlie,
 See there!" and he read, "To a happier shore
 I am gone with the woman I loved before
 You wrote despair on my heart and brow."
 I should have gone mad but for Charlie.

He stole his hand into mine, and said
 (Like some sorrowing angel spoke Charlie),
 "Mother, forgive for Christ's sweet sake—
 Mother, let God the vengeance take,—
 Pray for our enemies, we have read;"—
 So I tried to be good like Charlie;

And my soul was led to the spirit-land
 By the simple teachings of Charlie;
 My grief was calm'd by the peace of Heaven,
 I forgave as I hoped to be forgiven;—
 Yet I could not fathom or understand
 The gentle heart of my Charlie.

They said he was dying. It *could* not be!—
My life, my comfort, my Charlie?
I would not hear—in my scorn I smiled—
Did I not best know my own sweet child?
Yet in doubt—in fear—and in agony
I watch'd the face of my Charlie.

My fears were still'd as the time went by,
And I thought of the future of Charlie;
How good, how useful, how great would he
In those long future years come to be!
I pray'd I might live to hear the cry
In praise of my noble Charlie.

My God! my God! I have lived to see
The dying glance of Charlie!
Have seen those dark eyes close in death—
Have heard the last long painful breath
Of the only being dear to me,
My angel boy—my Charlie.

Long years have pass'd, and my hair is grey,
Since the day I parted with Charlie.
One summer eve I went to see
The grave beneath the cedar tree
In the old churchyard, where buried lay
My hopes in this world with Charlie.

With the sweetest flowers and the fair fern leaf,
I strew'd the ground where lay Charlie:
His memory was dear as himself had been,
Though for twenty years had that grave been green.
The world said my heart was broken with grief,—
Yes, it died in the dying of Charlie.

I knelt in the dusk, 'neath the cedar tree,
By the quiet grave of Charlie;
As I rose, by my side stood a beggar-man,—
He look'd worn and spent, and his cheeks were wan;
But I did not hear what he said to me,
For his voice was the voice of Charlie.

Then I look'd again in the man's dark face,
And I knew him—the father of Charlie.
He knew me too.—“Grace Harvey,” he said,
“God has heap'd His coals of fire on my head.”
He knelt down before me: “Now curse me, Grace,
For the woe I have caused you and Charlie.”

Like a breath from heaven the childish words
Long, long ago spoken by Charlie
Came to my mind ; the slighted wife,
The shame and grief of her sadden'd life
Came o'er me too,—but gentler chords
Had been touch'd by that memory of Charlie.

I had no curse, no reproach to give
To the suffering father of Charlie.
“ God bless you, Grace ; if you have forgiven
I may hope for mercy from even Heaven.
'Tis not long that I have to live.
Grace ! Let me see him—our Charlie.”

I look'd at the flowers and leaves at my feet,
Scatter'd over the green grave of Charlie,
But I could not speak, for I seem'd again
To be suffering over the killing pain
That had crush'd all things joyful, and young, and sweet,
From my heart with the death of my Charlie.

He guess'd the truth by one look at me,
And he fell by the grave of Charlie.
Christ save his soul—may his rest be sweet !
He begg'd to be laid at my darling's feet.
There are two graves now 'neath the cedar tree,
That I go in the evening dusk to see,—
They are those of my husband and Charlie.

THINGS NOT WORTHY.

How many things there are in the world which do not seem at all adapted for the position they occupy!

These things cannot be said to be vile in themselves, for verily there is little or nothing under the sun of which it can be said that there is no proper place where it can lie, dovetailed, as it were, in the peculiar spot marked out for it in the economy of nature, or jurisprudence of man.

But when we see certain things, albeit very good of themselves, so misplaced, either by casual and fortuitous circumstances, or by gross errors of judgment, there is ever excited in our minds a strong revulsion of feeling, which, according as our sense of propriety and good taste is worked upon by the palpable incongruity before us, disturbs the harmony of our ideas, and practically would set us to work to begin forthwith and put things to rights.

This powerful realization of the unfitness of multifarious objects for the situations in which they have been allowed to fall must not be confounded with those old-maidish notions of primness, order, and regularity, which are quite shocked if a chair be out of its place in a room; and which would dispose of all things, either ornamental or utilitarian, with such a formal and geometrical precision, that all ease and comfort must be ever unknown anywhere in proximity to the atmosphere of frigid propriety surrounding their august yet unlovable personality.

Man himself—that being who was made in the image of One who embodies all perfection—is now, by comparison, but a poor, unworthy object; no wonder, then, that so many of the things he meddles with should be unworthy too.

It is noticeable in children, when they are just big enough to toddle about and get into mischief, that they, more or less, damage almost everything they touch. They cannot well improve anything they come in contact with, and so they are told to put one thing down, to let another thing alone, and not even to look at a third, till the poor little ones think they are in evil case, and long for a removal to a situation where they shall be under less restraint, and where their maltreatment of furniture will produce less evil result. So man, when he meddles with the works of creation—things of themselves very good—often maltreats but not beautifies the mate-

rials he takes in hand. Much that is disorderly in arrangement and unworthy in workmanship is brought about by not properly taking into consideration the object in view when a certain work is undertaken. In looking at the works of creation—those “parts of His ways” visible to us,—all show a perfect fitness and adaptation, so that it cannot be said of any portion that it would have looked better made otherwise and disposed differently. Construction and adaptation are, in nature, properly joined together; but how often, in the works of men, we find beautiful objects rendered unsightly by wrong position, and worthy creations rendered odious by being out of character!

Classic ideas are thus often rendered futile by misplacement, and designs, worthy of a better fate, degraded by wrong juxtaposition and incongruous amalgamations.

It does not tend to pacify our notions of harmonious grouping to see the bust of Venus worked into the superlative ornamentation of a door scraper, when the figure of a toad, or other crawling reptile, embodied in the design, would have been in far better keeping, and the lowly receptacle for the dust of our feet would be worthier for the change. It is rather degrading to our artistic feelings to witness the marble columns of ancient Greece worked up into the doorway of a modern pig-sty, yet associations equally revolting to good taste are witnessed in a short ramble through any populous neighbourhood. What is that gentleman about, who has exalted a large cast of a swan with two necks upon a flower-basket pedestal, in the front of his house? Graceful indeed may be the beauteous curve of those two arching necks, but Tom Thumb geraniums and calceolarias do not look at home growing out of his back, and our fingers itch to cast the bird and his burden into the nearest pool.

Some things seem ever to look ashamed at the figure they cut when put to unworthy use; as if, inanimate as they are, they would rejoice greatly to fill a position where their especial qualifications, though of ever so humble a character, would be in some measure appreciated, and where they would not, at any rate, so offend good taste as to be considered a nuisance. Thus it is with pieces of broken pottery, for instance, when they are used to form part of an artificial rockery, on which some tidy cottager has been bestowing much time and inventive talent in order to make it as unnatural as possible.

These mutilated crocks seem to look appealingly at us, as though they would be so grateful if we would only pitch them into a gutter, make road-metal of them, or even give them to the street Arabs to throw stones at for diversion,—anything rather than hold that conspicuous position for which they know they are so utterly disqualified. It is not often that we see anything like harmony preserved among the ornaments which are meant to beautify the chimney-piece of a

cottage parlour or best kitchen. Brass candlesticks, china dogs, fish-girls wonderfully constructed of shells and seaweed, pretty egg-cups, and the old-fashioned cast metal wheatsheaf, shoulder each other in such confusion, that the jumble of beauty and utility has anything but a pleasing effect to the eye of taste. Often a clean sweep of the whole lot, and a rearrangement of a few of them, with an eye to their congruity of appearance, taking care that each piece stands by itself, and is in no way intruded upon by its neighbour, will effect a great change for the better, and leave a large quantity available for other service. Neatness and order please the eye, almost as much as beauty of design and harmony of colour, so that often a few articles, simple and unassuming in themselves, if tastefully arranged, will give greater satisfaction than a number of real objects of *vertu* crowded together in a heterogeneous manner.

Severe simplicity rarely offends the eye, but an absurd display of meretricious ornament often does; and in ordering and arranging those interesting objects which give, as it were, the finishing touches to a room or a residence, it is better to be sparing, and not overdo the thing, than run into the opposite extreme by a too lavish and vulgar display. It is not desirable always to give the best room in the house the appearance of an artist's studio, or a twopenny picture gallery; nor does it conduce to general comfort to convert a cosy apartment, which really should be a snugger, into an old curiosity shop. When we see people go in for too much in this sort of way, we feel sorry for the individual works of art or objects of interest which get all jumbled together so unworthily, just like the numerous birds and beasts which the child hurriedly crams into his little Noah's ark.

Most of us know the feeling of mental weariness which creeps over us after staring too long and indiscriminately at the multitudinous objects collected in any large museum or bazaar. Now this is not the sort of feeling any humane person would wish to inflict upon his friends when they come to see him at home; and, to avoid overtaxing the brains of your visitors, pray do not stupefy their faculties by putting more before their eyes at a time than either eye or brain will comprehend without more labour and study than is compatible with comfort.

How rarely it is that one enters a private house or a public building without the eye being arrested by something or other that seems utterly unworthy of the place it has been made to occupy! Sometimes we blame the architect for wrong composition or violent contrast; frequently the decorator, for lack of harmonious colouring or the perpetration of absurd devices; and very often the occupiers of the place, for introducing objects wholly at variance with the general design. As in life it takes a great deal to make us comfort

able, while a very little serves to make us more or less miserable; so, as far as the eye is concerned, it takes a great deal, in a measure, to satisfy it, while a very little that is out of order, or in bad keeping, mars all the effect.

There is what we may almost call a kind of aristocracy in works which express the highest kinds of beauty, and it is not well to see such placed in juxtaposition with anything that is common or unclean,—lame attempts at artistic design, which fain would be something beautiful, but, utterly failing there, become the vilest of abortions, to which it would be well not to admit the light of day.

The Venus de Medici is one of the few statues which seems almost to incorporate our ideas of feminine beauty and proportion; but, charming as it looks in Carrara marble, and lovely as it may appear in a statuette of delicate Parian, when we see it vilely moulded in coarse pottery, and either painted green or vulgarly glazed over, we are inclined to anathematize the perpetrators of the deed, and earnestly wish they would in future confine their taste to the elaboration of more serviceable chamber ware. The abortive efforts of genius to rise by a few mighty bounds to a lofty seat in the Temple of Fame are among the things not worthy which we must take note of. Men who are naturally endowed with certain characteristic attributes of a high order, frequently fail in bringing before the world works adequately proportionate to the gifts imparted to them, from a neglect of commonplace precautions to which their elevated intellects can scarcely succumb. Thus we see matter-of-fact plodders—very tortoises in the race—winning the laurels, and justly too, from those whose superior abilities, if they were only well organized, and directed by prudence, would win all before them in a canter. Lacking that “prudent, cautious self-control,” which Burns says is “*wisdom’s root*,” their high-mettled energies are ever running away with them, or bolting aside, instead of steadily pursuing one undeviating course, which, in the end, would probably lead them on to honour and distinction.

Designs never completed, plans undeveloped, and ideal conceptions never worked out, even in thought, are among the unworthy productions of men so wanting in resolution of purpose and unswerving perseverance. When we see certain attributes or qualities combined in one individual, we are apt, in watching such a character through life, to expect commensurate results; and an unworthy achievement, or failure in accomplishing any given purpose, brings to us considerable disappointment, even though we are but lookers on in the field of labour the other is occupied in.

It seems as though so many good talents were buried or thrown away when the person possessing them does not apply them in the achievement of any great purpose. Just as well have been

furnished with abilities simply of an average calibre, if extraordinary endowments are to be altogether unproductive of those worthy results we may be led to expect. If any of us were to advance a business man so many thousand pounds to embark in some trade or other, we should look for a return something like proportionate to the sum advanced, and moreover should feel considerably piqued if, in lieu of getting a handsome return for our liberality, or having the pleasure of seeing our friend freed from the pressing liabilities which hampered him, we found our pecuniary aid made of little or no service by gross negligence or unworthy application.

It lowers sadly our estimate of human nature when one, in whom we have reposed the most implicit confidence, turns out to be wholly unworthy of our high esteem, having made use of us but as tools to work out his own base ends, and having simulated a reciprocative warmth of friendship, only to inveigle us into disclosures which may serve his own private purposes, if not to involve us in difficulties.

We value an attainment frequently because we know full well the patient toil, the pains and assiduity required to possess it; and we cannot help in a measure believing that the highest *earthly* prizes are not thrown about at random among mankind, but are so placed that access can be had to them by no royal road, and they must be fairly won before they can be enjoyed.

When we hear of a person possessing certain gifts, of his having been born with a mind which intuitively adapts itself to abstruse calculations, or which receives impressions and retains them with the rapidity and reliable correctness of the photographer's plate, we look upon such a person assuredly with a degree of admiration, and perhaps feel almost jealous of his surpassing powers; but how different is it from the awe and veneration we feel for the man who, by indomitable courage and unwearied perseverance, has at length attained the highest eminence in that path of life which he marked out for himself, and along which he has had to struggle, unaided by patrons and unfriended by fortune!

And we can count among our profoundest philosophers, our greatest statesmen, and our ablest generals, men of this stamp, who have set to work with mental and bodily faculties of no extraordinary kind; and having placed a worthy object before their prospective gaze, have nobly pressed onward, arrested by no difficulties and restrained by no obstacles which a less resolute determination would have found altogether insurmountable. It is indeed a sad sight when we see a bold resolution and a spirit sustained by adverse fortune starting on an erratic course, and holding the same against the advice of friends, the taunts of enemies, and the correcting hand of a kind Providence.

We cannot help thinking how such courage and bold persistency would have borne down all opposition if it had contested in any worthy cause, and volunteered those exceptional attributes of strength in a work which would have ennobled their development, and at the same time have heaped high-piled honours on the man.

Often do we see mistakes made in choosing occupations for youth. Some with ardent spirits, which cannot brook continual restraint, get tied down to occupations whose drudgery is detestable to their seething ambition, which frets and fumes at the uncongenial task, until bad motives of a rebellious character instigate the spirit to wilful resistance of rightful authority, and they become recklessly wild and unmanageable. Perhaps, had they been exercised in a calling of quite another character, where there would have been more outlets for their exuberant animal spirits, with now and then something more allied to adventure, to vary their more regular every-day life, they might not have degraded themselves by running into such excess of folly. It is as bad when we see characters of stern and imperturbable stolidity placed in positions where nothing is required so much as that *élan* which our Gallic neighbours possess in so extraordinary a degree.

There is a vitality of action required in some posts which no amount of phlegmatic doggedness of purpose will render a man fit for; and abilities of a very inferior order, if they are set off by a sprightly dash of vigour and an elasticity of spirit, will suit the purpose better than the most long-headed astuteness, backed by honesty of purpose and inflexibility of will, if the owner of these cannot impulsively bestir either mind or body, but requires mature deliberation for the one, and a certain time to overcome the *vis inertiae* of the other. It is vexing to see intellectual attainments of the highest order lowered down to a sordid level, and "grubbing this earthly hole" in a manner more befitting a meaner capacity.

If proud science has once taught a mind to soar, to tie that soul down to dig for its bread among the very moles of humanity seems as unworthy its high destinies as it would be to chain the golden eagle among the geese in the barnyard, who know not the joy—almost divine—of circling in ether, on elastic wing, ten thousand feet above the cackle of this nether world. Worse and more unworthy still is it when we behold a being, the calibre of whose mind seems unusually great, whose vigorous intellect one may well envy, and whose spiritual refinement we should imagine could not brook self-debasement, swooping down from its lofty eminence, like the vulture from the sunlit cloud to the stinking carrion, and apparently revelling in sensual excess. How men, whose self-respect in other matters appears of the highest order, can suffer to have their reason partially dethroned, and humiliate themselves

before their inferiors in age, station, and understanding, so as to become very objects of *pity*, is as strange as it is lamentably true. And that this should come to pass so frequently merely to pander to a vitiated appetite, or from the lack of exercising that simple resolution which should say, "Hold! enough!" before the monitory voice within has lost the reins of government, is a sad stigma on philosophy as well as morality.

Take the same men, and accuse them of any other weakness—of any shortcomings of a commercial character, or of exhibiting pusillanimity in any transaction requiring strength of will and energy of purpose, and they would be ready to knock you down for your base insinuation. But only to "get over the score" a bit—that is, to commit themselves so that their usual strong sense is turned into maudlin silliness, or that kind of boisterous and yet more ridiculous braggadocio which lays bare those egotistical traits of character which sober reason would ever suppress—is thought nothing at all of, or even laughed at, as something rather pleasing to reflect on.

Oh for a faithful mirror, which for once would show to the sensualist the contemptible figure he cuts before the same community, and I verily think he would hesitate before he again submitted himself to the pity of his fellow-men.

Dr. Young says that "all men think all men mortal but themselves," and I really think this must be the case with many who do not seem to know how they commit themselves before society when over-indulgence has *elated*, or rather we will say *degraded* them. They are aware, doubtless, how contemptible Brown, Jones, and Robinson appear under such circumstances; but they hang to a fond delusion that they themselves always manage to preserve such a decorum that no one will think much the worse of them for being, as they imagine, only a little more sprightly and animated than usual. It is not to be much wondered at if a fool or a drunkard thinks he is by far the cleverest fellow in the company; but it is rather surprising that a man, when he has again recovered his sound sense, should continue to think everybody was duped as well as himself, and that he did not lower himself after all, even to those whose brains were in no way obfuscated by alcoholic stimulants.

It is very humiliating to think how few things any of us really do that are in any way worthy of ourselves, our opportunities, and our times. How seldom is it that we can look back upon a performance well executed, on which we have thrown our best energies and talents, and can, with anything like a feeling of personal satisfaction, say that it is *very good*!

There is, in general, rather more than a suspicion that the work in question is in no way worthy of the man or his means. We can

tell how we might have given it more excellence if we had not flagged a little, and slackened our hand here and there; and the best parts serve to remind us how the whole might have been much better if we had only thrown lustily more of our being into it. The masterpieces of great minds show us what the human will can accomplish when all the energies of mind and body are concentrated to one focus.

In looking at a great work of human agency, whether it be an artistic design, executed so as to endure for long centuries—such as the Nineveh sculptures, the Elgin marbles, the grand masonic piles of Michael Angelo, or the sublime productions of Raphael; whether it be a philosophical record, such as the papyrus roll of Aristotle, unfolding treatise upon treatise to guide the learned of generations yet unborn; or the *Principia* of Newton, those leading thoughts which profess to take their start where most of us leave off; or whether it be the pouring of the soul into harmonious verse, as Homer and Shakspeare did;—in all these works we see that, to attain to what was ever after to be deemed a worthy memorial of their greatness, these men *gave themselves*, as it were, to their high emprise; and, unless all that we do is hereafter to rank among the “things not worthy,” we must follow in their track, and whatever we put our hands unto, “do it with our might.”

It is said of some lion-hearted fellows that the word impossible was not admitted into their vocabulary, and that they had the audacity to imagine that they could accomplish nearly everything they undertook. Such intrepidity may often lead a man to act unadvisedly, and cause him to rush with rash impetuosity at difficulties which he discovers are insurmountable by ordinary patient toil. But though we would not have our fervid spirits charge madly to achieve impossibilities, only to come out of the fray like the gallant cavalry brigade at Balaclava, covered with glory, but broken and shattered, without any good end accomplished; yet in all things it behoves us well to consider that we have strong faculties of one kind or other, and talents of a high or low order, and with these we can perform, if not the noblest deeds, still some work worthy of this active body and sentient spirit.

Though we may often rank among the unsuccessful candidates, and our ablest efforts be found by the world at large things not worthy of cognizance, there is yet time and opportunity for doing good unto all men, and retrieving the time we have wasted away. And, too, there are prizes to be won yet, if we bend ourselves to the task with manly zeal, and so use our slender talents that in the very application of them we increase our store of knowledge, and at the same time labour towards one definite end, which, if it be worthy of our honest ambition, will shine before us as a guiding star, to lure us on through dangers and difficulties, until our object is achieved. If we

stumble and fall, and give up before reaching the goal of our hopes, we reflect but little credit on our nature, our nation, or our Maker ; for, doubtless, we are made with qualities which will cause our efforts to ripen into fruition, if we have not altogether mistaken our vocation, and are trying to sail against wind and tide. How many there are who, on walking over an ill-cultivated farm, can tell oracularly how this rushy piece wants efficiently draining, that furzy pasture cleaning, and the other parts ploughing deeper, and putting under a better system of tillage, before ever any crops will be realized at all adequate to the quantity and quality of the land under cultivation, who yet at the same time are looking for success to attend their own efforts when their mental culture is greatly neglected, and while parts of their mind, once fertile, are now lying fallow, other parts never probed to the requisite depth, and their brain estate generally worked without order and system ! This is bad farming indeed. If one thing more than another is worthy of our attention, we should not rank as least the pleasure of ascertaining something like the range and power of our mental faculties.

And in the process we may discover new fields susceptible of good tilth, and deep soundings where we expected shallow water ; and, learning better to know ourselves, may “ put the right foot foremost ” towards acquiring a more comprehensive knowledge of things in general. If, on the other hand, this investigation into our private capacities reveals to our inmost selves the naked fact that what appeared to others, and perhaps even to us, of a subtle and profound character, is altogether airy and superficial, and that there is in reality no solid substratum of knowledge on which we dare think of erecting a temple to Fame, we may at least learn not to make our folly conspicuous, nor to dishonour wisdom by drawing false bills on an empty exchequer. There are few things more unworthy of a man, with any pretensions to magnanimity, than the desire publicly to appear well versed on subjects about which he really is densely ignorant. A man with good tact and versatile conversational power may brave the deception, but a home question from one who really is thoroughly conversant thereon will easily make a big rent in such a bagful of moonshine, and the parader of false philosophy or assumed wisdom sinks (or at least should do so) to his proper level.

Looking out of the window from where I am writing, I see an old white horse with a chain round his neck, the end of which is not fastened to the ground, but drags after him to prevent his straying too far. He classes now among the things not worthy, yet he looks as though he had seen better days ; and when his ribs were well covered and his pasterns less swollen, he may have cantered gaily along the highway, neighing with very joy, and as light-hearted as the bonny lassie who, with ruddy cheeks and waving tresses,

revelled in her morning's ride. There is something rather saddening in the thought that when we, too, get old and grey, and rather shaky about the legs, we may have to drag a chain of some sort or other about with us, and, ranking among the "things not worthy" of the world's approving smile, become an object for pitiful contemplation.

But "let us now be up and doing," and, recognizing our position mentally, socially, and nationally, strive to make the best of the implements and faculties given us to work with; nor let it ever be said of us that we neglected our opportunities, or scorned the use of small means for the attaining of great ends. If we can boast of high endowments, let us show that we know how to employ them; and if our natural gifts are few, let us tell the world how to make the most of a little, and prove that we do not despise the meanest of God's blessings, nor dare to rank them among *things not worthy*.

C. W. P.

BREAD UPON THE WATERS.

NO. I.—THE MAGDALEN HOSPITAL.

“And Jesus said unto her, . . . Go, and sin no more.”

WHEN I commenced the labours which have since become the leading occupation, as they are the chief pleasure of my life, I had been bowed to the very earth by a heavy and crushing sorrow. As in diseases of the body there is a culminating period, a crisis which either kills the patient or enables him to shake off his fell enemy and become hale and well ; so in disorders of the mind there is a climax of agony, a depth of blank, hopeless, helpless wretchedness, beyond which there is no passing, and after which the sufferer—I am speaking of the men of this world—is left panting, weary, and heart-sore, and with a more than half-indifferent curiosity as to the phase of torture he will be called upon to endure next. The capacity for suffering is limited, like the other powers of humanity; and while he who has most heart knows most sorrow, and while any one capable of a *real* sorrow is capable of good, if the sad incidents of life were massed together at one time, their aggregate weight would be enough to bow the proudest head and break the strongest spirit. And yet, as an American writer wisely and eloquently says, “suffering comes to us through and from our whole nature. It cannot be winked out of sight. It cannot be thrust into a subordinate place in the picture of human life. It is the chief burden of history. . . . It gives to fictions their deep interest. It wails through much of our poetry. A large part of human vocations are intended to shut up some of its avenues. It has left traces on every human countenance over which years have passed. It is to not a few the most vivid recollection of life.” And this is the more obvious when we peer below the surface of what good old Archbishop Leighton called “the delusive hopes and false joys of this our wretched state.” Who among my readers cannot recall a time when the sunshine lost its brightness, when the beautiful uniformity of nature seemed an aggravation of the bitterness within; and when, after summing up the crosses, trials, and vexations on every side, and crying, like the patriarch of old, “All these things are against me,” the ever-absorbing desire has been to creep out of sight, like some wounded deer, and leave a world wherein the thorns are so cruel and the wounds so bitterly severe? It is at such a time as this when the undisciplined and unregenerate heart rebels most against the previsions of the Inscrutable, and is impiously disposed to question the wisdom of the All-wise. This is the time when the suicide loads the pistol

or drains the fatal cup ; when the worldling seeks, by unholy excitement and degrading pleasures, to drown care and purchase an immunity from memory ; when the philosopher finds he has been leaning upon a broken crutch ; and when the Christian alone bows his knee with tender resignation and humble gratitude to the Father, whose chastenings are so many proofs of love. Happy are they who have reached this stage in life's journey before the great trouble of their existence lays them low. Happy are they who have not to stagger to and fro like a drunken man ; to put forth the hands blindly for external aid, and to strain the eyes eagerly for some gleam of light, when the inevitable evil days come, and the grasshopper is a burden, and desire doth fail. It matters not from which quarter the blow comes. It matters not whether the honourable ambition of years has culminated in disgrace ; or the darling of your old age has been summoned away, or, worse still, has become an alien to you ; or the one sympathetic soul is estranged ; or your favourite projects have failed ; or the dear objects of your earthly hopes and love lie buried one by one in a dark hole beneath the churchyard yew—it matters not which phase your correction takes,—until you can say, with the sublime faith of the Shunammite woman, “It is well,” even when the heart-strings are strained almost to breaking, your sufferings will never be to you blessings in disguise. This is no mere pulpit truism. Even the polished cynic of that trifling nation whose irreligion is a proverb, tells his disciples that, though philosophy triumphs over future trials, present ills triumph over philosophy. We all—

“ Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong ”

when called upon to administer consolation or proffer sympathy to our brother who has fallen in the mire ; but when our own coat is bespattered, and we ourselves are under the chariot wheels, we are too apt to lose sight of the sublimity of suffering, and to remember only its pain. This, at least, has been my experience ; and, speaking from no platform of superiority, but as a wayworn, erring man, who has had many and heavy trials, I appeal to the inward monitor of all whether this be not their experience too. When indeed it is given us to say, with Job, “ Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,” we have taken an important step towards that faith which not only accepts meekly, but glories in temporal affliction. “ Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines ; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat ; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls : yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation,” is the grand uncompromising utterance of a heart which had found this faith, and had come to regard suffering as a testimony

of the Creator's care. How many of us can say this? How many of us can kiss the rod, nor seek an anodyne of our own? How many of us try to absorb our individuality in a round of occupation, and to so gain that ease which is, if we would but accept it, freely offered to all the weary and heavy laden! It is because of this inherent craving for work and change on the one hand, and the absolute certainty of relief on the other, that I venture to address those who are suffering, those who have suffered, and those who will suffer—a category which comprises, alas! the entire human race,—and to point out means whereby their warmest human energies may find an ample sphere, and their spiritual needs a glorious sufficiency, at one and the same time. For we must not lose sight of the necessities of the body; and as the first resource of the goaded steed is movement and flight, so the instinct which prompts a healthy man, smarting under disaster, to plunge eagerly into action, is the earliest and strongest impulse of all. If, then, we can make it subservient to the great end,—if we can lead the wounded spirit, through the works of the flesh, to look for solace where real solace can be only found,—we shall effect a permanent, a substantial, and a practical good. Midway between the ascetic monasticism of the Papacy, and the fierce demand for exciting occupation which tinctures the world, lies my modest scheme. It possesses some of the self-abnegation, and infinitely more of love and charity than the one, and all the variety, engrossment, and absorption of the other. I know not why a broken spirit or a sorely tried heart should not be treated as a speciality, like some physical ailments; and I should be gratified indeed if my suggestions were adopted as a panacea by all who felt that the gaunt hand and sad presence of mental suffering was upon them. Let them, at the very first sign of its approach, plunge beneath the current of their daily life. Let them go out into the highways and byways, among the poor and miserable, the guilty and the fallen. If their regular bread-and-cheese-earning labours occupy them engrossingly, let them still set apart a specified portion of time for good deeds. If they cannot spare half a day in the week, let them give half an hour; but let it be a compact between us that there shall be neither lukewarmness nor hanging back when the hand is once put to the plough. It is not the amount of exertion, but the extent to which the whole soul is thrown into it, which makes the prescription effectual; and with misery at every street corner, and with anxious, careworn, pining hearts in many a house, it is impossible to doubt that the one may be relieved as much as the other will be assuaged.

It must be so. Holy Scripture declares it; modern philosophy enforces it; knowledge of the human heart confirms it; and personal experience, if it be needed, corroborates them all. Living in this vast London of ours,—

“The common sewer of Paris and of Rome;”

or, as I prefer to think of it, in the language of Carlyle, "this monstrous tuberosity of civilized life, the capital of England;" I was led, before the numb, stunned darkness of my affliction had been irradiated by the faintest gleam of light, to peer into the hidden places about me,—at first by that fierce unrest which those writhing under sorrow so keenly know; then by awakened curiosity, and a desire to know and see more; and finally by an honest, humble wish to alleviate, to elevate, and to console. These are the stages through which such patients as will accept me for their physician will probably pass too, and with the assurance—nay, the certainty—that they will gain that pearl of price, peace of heart, I shall surely find my followers neither halting nor few. Come with me, then, into the alleys and the courts, the hidden places, the secret dens, where the foulest ignorance, the densest superstition, the blackest sin, and the most degrading habits, are all festering in one huge and loathsome social sore. Come where unnameable vices rear their heads unblushingly; come where there are large tracts of densely populated country, to which, as Professor Kingsley said of one of the corrupt cities of old, "Paris is earnest and Gomorrah chaste." In many a noisome alley and foetid court, in many a thoroughfare where poverty, wretchedness, and crime go hand in hand, are fit objects for your sympathy and assistance. The vineyard has never labourers enough; and if, as the wise philosopher of Chelsea just quoted has it, "the wealth of a man is the number of things he loves and blesses, which he loves and is blessed by," there are assuredly riches for all in this London of ours alone. Still, it is one of the most cheering and encouraging facts connected with the experience of those who earnestly dive below the surface of society, that, concurrently with the horror their discoveries inspire, comes a recognition of the good inherent even in things evil, and of the self-imposed efforts of other labourers in the same field. There are both associations and individuals humbly and persistently endeavouring to elevate the poorer and degraded, of whom the world never hears, and who would blush, indeed, to have the sort of fame which tearing the veil from their anonymity would give. The newspapers publish an outline now and then of a refuge, or an hospital, or a workhouse, or an asylum; but we then see results rather than the means whereby they are reached. We hear of the practical working of a midnight meeting, a thieves' reformatory, or an outcasts' home; but the complex difficulties of their establishment, the constant care and trouble attending their supervision, and the fervent, prayerful efforts by which their leading spirits seek to bring lost sheep into the fold, seldom come before us. The ridicule and opposition of the world; the lukewarm competition of those who sympathize with our wishes, but demur to our mode of carrying them out; the obstacles which spring from and are an

integral portion of the very nature of such institutions as I have named, should be all estimated by those wishing to arrive at truth. It was not until after many a visit and exploration that I came to know this. For when my trouble was at its deepest I wandered here and there, objectless and purposeless; and it was by what fools call chance, and the wise recognize as the mysterious workings of Providence, that my desultory strollings became replete with interest and animate with life. Passing by the intermediate stages by which this was gradually effected, and deferring for a future season the details of the varied experience among criminals, outcasts, and others at war with the world, I have acquired since, I propose to briefly state how I became interested in the institution of which I shall give a necessarily imperfect sketch.

Years ago a girl in humble circumstances was tempted by a scoundrel, and yielded to temptation, as you and I, my brother, have done,—how often is only known to our God. Deserted, heartsore, and weary of the world, she was rescued, when on the very brink of suicide, by a dear and good friend who has long since gone to receive his reward. He either did not know of THE MAGDALEN HOSPITAL, or thought its scope was confined to the professional harlot, or shrank from exposing the poor bruised reed to the chances of rejection, of harsh discipline, or of further contamination from bad companionship; and he therefore, not without considerable difficulty, procured her a private resting-place, where she soon afterwards died from what the doctors called atrophy, but which we knew to be deep contrition of spirit and a broken heart. The harrowing particulars of this poor creature's sorrow—she was a mere child,—her patient acceptance of suffering and degradation as her lot, was enough to rouse any one from the selfish contemplation of his own grief, and deeply interested me in the horrible social problem which such cases as hers compel all earnest men to endeavour to solve. Other circumstances tended to direct my steps aright, but I date from this sad incident my devotion to the pursuits which now absorb so great a portion of my time; and this it is which eventually determined me to inquire into the constitution and working of the various establishments designed to relieve such poor creatures as the one I saw sink under the heavy punishment awarded to her sin.

It was probably after some such shocking experience as this, that a small band of philanthropists met, more than a hundred years ago, to consider that great sin of great cities, to cope with which so many noble efforts have been and are now being made. In spite of "much ridicule and opposition," say the old minute-books of THE MAGDALEN—which, musty, yellow, and timeworn, contain an accurate history of the charity from its commencement until now,—they persevered, and at their third meeting upwards of a thousand pounds

was subscribed towards providing a home for such fallen women as were penitent, and willing to give up their way of life.

To Mr. John Dingley belongs the credit of originating this noble scheme, and it is gratifying to find his memory kept green within the walls of the asylum. Before his time, the dunghill, the lazar-house, and the hospital were not only thought the most appropriate, but the most righteous, dying-places for such poor women as had succumbed to the sinful wiles of man. It would be interesting to know what led worthy Mr. Dingley to consider the subject, not as an abstract question for fireside moralizings, but as a fearful stain on the conscience of the community, to be dealt with boldly and at once. It would be pleasant to clear the memory of this good citizen of the dust left on it by time, to discover his habits, tastes, and pursuits, and the surroundings of his life. It would be curious to learn his private history, and to see whether it was the softening influence of sorrow which brought about the desire to benefit the people of his generation. We learn from the same old brass-bound ledgers, from pages which are yellow, and in characters rusty from lapse of time, that he was appointed treasurer of the charity, and authorized to take the lease of the premises occupied by the London Infirmary in Prescott Street, Goodman's Fields. Here, on August 18th, 1758, the Magdalen Hospital was opened, and fifty beds provided for the people it was designed to serve. The Rev. Jonathan Reeves was appointed chaplain, and preached the opening sermon on the above day from the 20th verse of the 15th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke:—"And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Surely these sacred words must have tingled on the ears and vibrated on the hearts of those assembled to ask a blessing on the new venture. Surely both teacher and hearers must have been affected even to tears at the thought of the poor prodigals to whom they were about to offer, not indeed a fatted calf, but life-giving food, in place of the wretched husks wherein they were wallowing with the swine. From the day on which this sermon was preached, interest in the institution gradually spread. Allusions are made to it in contemporaneous publications; it is named in the biographies of the period; and its anniversary sermons were almost invariably preached by men of learning and repute. On the two years immediately following the one just quoted, the unhappy Dr. Dodd was the preacher selected; and further reference to the old books of the hospital furnishes the text of each of his discourses. In 1759 this was the 12th and 13th verses of the 9th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew:—"But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go

ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice : for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Next year it was the 10th verse of the 19th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke :—“ For the Son of man is come to seek that which was lost.” At this lapse of time how singular do the conjunction of preacher and hearers appear ! The man who seventeen years later was to die a shameful death on Tyburn tree, was now employing all his famous eloquence on behalf of women whose disgraceful lives formed their claim to sympathy. Dodd was then in the full tide of worldly prosperity. He had taken orders some six years previously, and soon after this date was appointed chaplain in ordinary to King George III. His society was sought after, his literary efforts appreciated, his preaching run after by the town. Did any warning voice whisper to him, on that sabbath morning, that some of the women before him would have honoured homes while he lay in Newgate, and would breathe their last amid the affectionate attentions of husband and children, while he expiated his crime upon the gallows ? It needs no very strong effort of imagination to see some of his congregation touched by his appeals, reclaimed by the philanthropic exertions of the good Samaritans about them, provided with reputable homes, and finally married, and carefully nurtured and cared for by generous and forgiving husbands. This is no poetic sketch or far-fetched fancy. Thank God, who blesses all efforts, however humble, to make His world brighter and better, such cases are happening around us now. To the honour of the wives and mothers of England, there are more applications for domestic servants who have been reclaimed from the streets than the supply can meet ; and it may prove a stimulus to the charitable to learn that, in the majority of instances, the women so employed become not merely efficient servants, but in due course are absorbed into the great current of life, and fulfil their legitimate functions as heads of households, and helpmates to honest men. The statistics of the homes which are worked in connection with the Midnight Meetings prove this ; and though, from the greater number provided for by the Magdalen, its managers are able to comply with nearly all the requisitions for servants made to it, the results, as I shall presently show, are equally satisfactory. Had any one on that Sunday morning whispered that the prosperous, well-seeming divine would offer a bribe for a metropolitan living, and be ignominiously ousted from his royal chaplaincy ; would afterwards wander to and fro on the Continent with his quondam pupil Lord Chesterfield, and when inducted into a country parsonage, would reduce his fortunes by extravagance and riotous living, until forging his patron’s name was the only resource left,—would not that member of the congregation have been condemned as a slanderer, and flouted as a false prophet ? Twice

again did Dr. Dodd preach on behalf of the Magdalen, the last time being on July 27th, 1769—only eight years before he was executed,—when the first stone of the present building in St. George's Fields was laid.

For good Mr. Dingley, Sir John Fielding, Mr. Jonas Hanway, and others of their fellow committee-men, were not satisfied with the asylum wherein their good work commenced, and as early as 1763 began to agitate for its transfer to a more commodious site and a more healthy locality. At meeting after meeting the subject was discussed, until it was finally decided to purchase six acres of ground in what was then the open country known as St. George's Fields. In 1768 authority was obtained to extinguish the commonage rights, and half the land thus obtained was let out on building leases, and upon the other half the present hospital stands. It is now a gloomy mass of dingy brickwork, with forlorn and soot-stained trees sparsely stationed along its front, but the bright and well-curtained windows of which have that indescribable air of solid comfort which belongs to a properly appointed English home. This portion of the building is appropriated to the residence of the chaplain, and the visitor must cross a spacious hall, and gain the quadrangle beyond, before he sees even the windows of the wards wherein the hospital occupants are. These are shuttered and guarded from observation with extreme care, and it may be here stated that the excessive precaution taken to prevent the poor women being seen reminds an uninitiated stranger of what he has read of the manners and customs of the East. Public service is held in the chapel twice every Sunday, and the entire hospital is thrown open to the public for a couple of hours one day—when the anniversary sermon is preached—in every year. But the inmates are so placed in the chapel gallery as to be invisible to the rest of the congregation; and while the house is being inspected, they are stowed away in the one ward not shown, so that it were almost as easy for a Christian missionary to obtain admission to the seraglio of a Mahometan as for an outside philanthropist to inspect for himself the poor creatures who are being redeemed from a career of bestiality and vice to one of decency and repute.

It is an open question whether the managing committee, in their laudable anxiety to avoid ministering to prurient and morbid tastes, do not carry their prohibitions too far. The effect of the heavily shuttered windows, looking, as most of them do, upon a perfectly private and rather desolate yard, is to give a penal aspect to all those portions of the building occupied as wards.

Looking from the doorway of the hall across a small railed-in space in the centre of the quadrangle, where some sooty shrubs and trees seem to be appealing pitifully for light and air, and where an ungraceful memorial stone has been raised to the memory of the

founder, Mr. Dingley; the pilasters of the closed chapel on the one side, and of the hospital on the other; the uniform angle of the sombre shutters to the right and left, the very smoothness of the broad path circling the enclosure, all speak of the dreary sameness of a prison rather than the quiet and peaceful snugness of a home. This dead level of regularity is of course unavoidable in an establishment of the size and capabilities of the Magdalen; but the effect on the mind of the spectator is not cheering, and it is only when the official rooms on the other side are gained, and the history and benefits of the charity are heard and appreciated, that he recovers his serenity, as the depressing influences of a first glance are forgotten in the absorbing interest of the particulars he learns. This paper being professedly a sketch rather than a narrative, any attempt to minutely trace the rise and progress of the institution from the days of Mr. Dingley to the present time would be out of place. It will better accord with my purpose to describe the mode in which women are admitted, how they are received after they are passed by the committee, and what is their subsequent life in and after leaving the house.

First, however, let me state that the list of clergymen who have preached the anniversary sermons of late years includes many names thoroughly familiar to us all. Among the bishops and archbishops who have pleaded the cause of the fallen, the honoured names of Howley, Blomfield, Sumner, Coplestone, Longley, Denison, Bickersteth, and Wilberforce, stand prominently forth; while in those of Melvill, Dale, Croly, and Moore, we have further proof, were it needed, of the eloquence which has, in our own day, been enlisted for this good cause. A board affixed outside the Blackfriars Road door of the Magdalen states that women are admitted on application between nine and eleven on the morning of the first Thursday in each month, and as this implies restriction to a specified day, it is satisfactory to know that no woman considered eligible is ever turned away, no matter when she may apply. This is a manifest advance on the system previously in vogue, and does much to remove some of the vague misconceptions which are abroad concerning the hospital. If it be not practicable to admit the poor penitent into the house,—and she cannot become one of its regular inmates until approved by the committee and certified by the surgeon,—lodgings are found for her in the neighbourhood, and she is put under the care of some matron whose trustworthiness has been proved. She then takes her turn, on the first Thursday in the following month, with the other new comers, and goes with them through a prescribed routine. After signing a printed form of request, all women are called upon to answer the questions of the committee, who accept or reject applications as they think the women before them incorrigible or likely to

be reclaimed. As a rule, those who are more than twenty-five years of age have not much chance of admission, while lengthened prostitution or confirmed drunkenness invariably debars the candidate from the aid she seeks. The committee, rightly or wrongly, act on the belief that it is almost hopeless to attempt to reclaim the woman who has been long in her sin, or whose age prevents her having that malleability of character and susceptibility to hallowing influences, without which persuasion and kindness is in vain; and, weighing the probabilities of contaminating the young against the chance of benefiting the more mature, make it their rule, save under very exceptional circumstances, to refuse admission to all who have concluded their twenty-sixth year. Assuming the surgical examination to have been passed, and the woman declared free of disease; assuming all committee-room questions to have been satisfactorily answered, age to have been no disqualification, father's and mother's name, occupation, and supposed whereabouts, and many other minute particulars, to have been candidly given, and the committee to have decided upon adopting the applicant before them as an inmate of the house, she is handed over to the matron, and "warded;"—(it should be also mentioned that preference is always given to young women who have been seduced, but who have not been prostitutes;)—that is, she is put into a warm bath, with a bathwoman to see that she is thoroughly purified and cleansed. Her own clothes are then taken away, and—after having been "washed, boiled, or baked," as the presence of vermin or their degree of filthiness may demand—are dried and ticketed with her name, and carefully preserved, in order that they may be returned to her in the event of her prematurely leaving the asylum she has gained. After the bath she dresses herself in the sombre uniform of the house, and is relegated to one of its six wards, there to be employed on such labour as seems best suited to her capacity and antecedents. Nos. 1, 2, and 3 of these wards are devoted to needlework of various kinds; No. 4 is the kitchen; No. 5 the laundry; and No. 6 the infirmary. In estimating the chances of reformation, much stress is laid upon the education received. This is nearly always of the scantiest,—five weeks ago there was not an educated woman among the one hundred and fourteen inmates,—but much depends upon whether it has been taught in a workhouse or in a national school. The women whose childhood has been spent in the former place are more incorrigible, and have an infinitely blunter moral sense, than those who have received instruction at the latter establishments; and this experience may be accepted as invariable. The treatment of the women is of the gentlest kind. By the practical knowledge they gain of household employment they are qualified for situations wherein they may honestly earn their bread; the chaplain exhorts them daily, and it is

one of the noblest boasts this charity can put forth, that no young woman who has behaved well during her stay in the house has ever been discharged unprovided for. From the personal inquiries I have made, and from the statistics furnished me, I am delighted to know that upwards of two-thirds of the whole number of women admitted into the Magdalen since its commencement in 1758 have been permanently saved. In proof of this, it is only necessary to say that great pains have been taken, on former occasions, to trace out all those women who left the house during the space of four years. The several periods given below were from 1786 to 1790; from 1839 to 1843; from 1846 to 1850; and from 1858 to 1862, viz. :—

FIRST PERIOD.

Discharged in the said four years, of every description	246
Behaving well	157
Behaving ill	74
Lunatic	4
Dead	1
Situation unknown (some, probably, have retired from observation, others, perhaps, being dead)	10
	— 246

SECOND PERIOD.

Total discharged in credit in four years	289
Behaving well (several married)	194
Insane	1
Dead	5
Behaving ill	43
Unknown	46
	— 289

THIRD PERIOD.

Total discharged in credit	378
Behaving well (several married)	273
Dead	4
Behaving ill	24
Unknown	77
	— 378

FOURTH PERIOD.

Total discharged in credit	313
Behaving well (several married)	232
Dead	3
Behaving ill	36
Unknown	42
	— 313

Surely the above figures require neither comment nor amplification. Flourishing in our midst is an institution which, by year after year housing and succouring the broken-down, jaded sinners, honestly fulfils the design of the worthy men whose good deeds live so long after they have passed away. Its size, its capabilities, and its usefulness place the Magdalen immeasurably above every other establishment of the kind. The impression which prevails in certain quarters, that it is to some extent a close borough, managed by a small clique, is manifestly incorrect; but it would notwithstanding be very gratifying to have more light thrown upon its internal arrangements. At present there is some unnecessary reticence, not on the part of the administrative officers, but in the rules laid down for their guidance; and it would be satisfactory if, by an amplified annual statement, by offering greater facilities of inspection to the benevolent, and by giving convincing proof of the catholicity of their mode of admission, the managing committee would extend the knowledge of the good they effect. This is now but imperfectly understood, and even the Charity Commissioners, by not publishing their report on the Magdalen, and by making a ridiculous stipulation that it should be considered a private document, have favoured the obscurity under which the operation of the charity labours. It is not impossible that improvements could be made in its rules; it is not impossible that the tacit regulation excluding women who have been long in their sin might be rescinded or modified; and that the already comprehensive benefits it confers might be still further enlarged. That the sad evil which the Magdalen is designed to allay is an embarrassing one, is no reason that the earnest and religious-minded should put off its consideration until that convenient season which is so hazardous a waiting-time.

I commenced by appealing specially to the sorrow-stricken, because I know that none have so much faith in the providence of God as those who have felt His chastening hand; but surely I have said enough to interest all in the establishment I have described. It forms but one link in a long chain of noble missionary effort; it benefits only the social pariahs of a certain grade; and its position and aims are exceptional and peculiar: but inasmuch as it has rescued brand after brand from the burning; and as it has bravely stood the test of time, of ridicule, and change, so, as it seems to me, does it call for extended sympathy and enlarged support in the name of Him who came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

THE INFLUENCE OF GAOL CHAPLAINS.

BY THE REV. C. B. GIBSON, M.R.I.A.

(*Late Chaplain in the Convict Service*).

A RESPECTABLE gentleman in the City had a son who gave him and every member of his family a great deal of trouble by his extravagant and felonious propensities. Complaining to his wife, one morning, of the sums abstracted from his cash-box, that lady replied,—

“Perhaps it would be as well to send him to our country cousins in Yorkshire. Let him work on their farm for his food. His labour may be an object to them.”

“I think you have hit on it, my dear; we will try it for a few years, at all events, provided our cousins will take him. I shall tell them to work him hard, and to keep his nose to the grinding-stone.”

The country cousins were consulted, and said they would be “delighted” to receive the lad and give him food and clothing for his labour. He was accordingly sent off. For a few years the reports of his conduct were most favourable; but after this there was a change, and the Yorkshire farmer wrote to say that he could “keep him no longer,” that “he refused to do an honest day’s work, and, worse still, was setting a bad example to every member of the family. Send for him at once, or I shall pack him off. I would not keep such a fellow in my house.”

“What *shall* I do with him?” said the father of the lad, with a sigh, to his wife.

“Send for him,—he is our own son,—and let us do our best *to reform him ourselves*. After all, it is hardly fair to expect our Yorkshire cousin to keep him.”

The question, “What shall we do with our convicts?” was easily answered some years ago: “Send them to Botany Bay, Van Diemen’s Land, or any of our colonies,” was the reply. So they were sent, and there was an end of them and the difficulty. They were provided for for life. But this state of things no longer exists: one colony after another has refused to receive our convicts; the colonists of the Cape of Good Hope had nearly risen in arms against us for attempting to send a ship-load there, and resolutely resisted their landing; and we were obliged to give in, and send our merchandise elsewhere. There is but one colony—Western Australia—

which is still willing to receive a portion of them, but a pressure has just been put upon it and the mother country by the Colonial Government at Melbourne, which, there is little doubt, will effectually close this port against our convict ships. Indeed, there is reason to believe that the English Government has succumbed to the pressure put upon it by the people of Melbourne. They think we ought to deal with our own moral sewage, and not direct its course towards them, or deluge our colonies with it. "We have enough of our own to deal with, without yours," is their language; and we must confess there is reason in language like this.

This being the state of things, the question is no longer "What shall we do with our convicts?" but "*How shall we reform them, or any portion of them?*" To this most important question we would now address ourselves.

The machinery for the reformation of a convict is of a twofold nature,—moral and material, physical and spiritual; between which there should exist as much harmony as possible; and where there appears no real harmony, there should be no clashing. There should be a perfect understanding between the governor of the prison and the chaplain. The governor's duty is to see that the sentence is fairly carried out and the discipline of the prison maintained. It is the chaplain's duty to watch over the mind and heart of the prisoner, *and to mark well the effect of the prison discipline upon the moral nature of the convict.*

We say this emphatically and advisedly, inasmuch as there is an impression abroad that chaplains have nothing whatever to do with discipline. We happen to know a chaplain who was summarily dismissed for publishing a book, in which he attempted to show that a new feature in convict discipline was producing a large increase in prison relapses. As a rule, the less a chaplain interferes, the better he will be liked. Let him take his salary, eat his bread and butter, and hold his tongue.

But suppose he should see his *own work* marred and brought down *by the discipline*; that he be placed in the position of a clergyman who feels his church shaking and crumbling about his ears from the working of a large and powerful steam-engine; what is he to do?—Politely tell his neighbour to stop it, and be laughed at for his folly? No; the man who does the injury must be publicly prosecuted.

Let us notice the various kinds of discipline to which each convict is subjected, before he becomes a perfectly free man, such as he was before his imprisonment; and the effect, or probable effect, of the discipline in the way of moral reformation.

The convict commences his novitiate in one of our cellular prisons. If an Englishman, he is sent to Millbank Prison, on the

Thames, near Vauxhall Bridge. The majority of male convicts are drafted in here from the county and borough prisons, where they are confined previous to conviction. A prisoner regularly confined in a county, city, or borough prison, *after* conviction, is not a "convict," as this term is now understood. In these prisons the longest period of detention is two years. It requires a sentence of five years, and an incarceration in a Government prison, to have the convict brand properly and legally burned in.

Millbank, though a separate and cellular prison for females, is little more than a receiving-house for males, where they remain but a few weeks, and are then sent to the beautiful model prison of Pentonville, in Islington. We call it beautiful, and so it is,—a beautiful piece of machinery—a beautiful man-trap, or mouse-trap, but one almost too complicated for unskilful hands to meddle with: for a few more turns of the screw than are laid down in the scale by the late Sir Joshua Jebb—by whom the machine was constructed,—and you injure both the body and mind of the prisoner.

Here, at Pentonville, the prisoner may be truly said to commence his novitiate; but as the Roman Catholic chaplain of the separate prison of Mountjoy, Dublin, said, with surpassing *naïveté*, "These poor people *are not called by God* to a contemplative life; and hence their minds soon require to be relieved by occupation. If this be denied, the almost inevitable consequence is idleness and *ennui*, from which they take refuge in reminiscences nowise favourable to improvement."

There was an attempt made some time ago in Ireland to introduce what is called the "idle discipline;" and as this discipline was supposed to be new—although it had been imported from America,—it "took" for a time, and was countenanced by people who should have known better. "Idleness and dislike of steady work," write the Four Visiting Justices of the West Riding prison of Wakefield, "are probably the most universal characteristics of the criminal class. We in England have sought to correct that by making labour as penal as possible, by the treadmill and the crank. The directors of Irish convict prisons have adopted the opposite plan, they have made idleness penal, work a privilege."

This seems to sound well, but let us read a little farther:—

"The prisoner, kept in the strict seclusion of his cell, and forced to be idle, soon feels that to have something to do would be a great relief to the intense monotony of his existence. The want of work becomes the severest punishment; so severe indeed, that were it continued too long, the mind would give way under it."

To say nothing of the mental and moral evils arising from the idle cellular discipline—among which we find madness and suicide, examples of which have come under our own observation, some of

which we relate in "Life among Convicts,"—to say nothing of these, the attempt to *force* a man to be idle seems directly opposed to all our preconceived notions, and as much opposed to the laws of nature as to the command of God, who has said, "Six days *shalt* thou labour, and do all thy work."

But we cannot violate any one of God's natural laws—for the laws of nature are the laws of God—with impunity to ourselves or others. This idle discipline would not succeed even with the lower animals. Let us, for example, introduce honey into each particular cell of a beehive, and deprive the bee of the power of gathering and manufacturing for itself, for the space of three months, or even three weeks, and we shall have every bee in the hive in the condition of the gentleman that Doctor Abernethy advised to live on a shilling a day and earn it. The late Doctor Bayly, physician to the Queen, and for many years superintendent of Millbank Prison, says, in one of his reports on cellular or solitary confinement, "When the punishment is continued for many months, and especially when it is carried out in all its integrity, it exerts, as might be expected, a depressing influence on the whole nervous system of the convicts. The result is shown partly in the loss of physical vigour, and of the power of resisting external impressions, and partly in an impairment of mental energy."

We regret to say that some prison chaplains have given their sanction to the idle cellular discipline, on account of the advantages which they imagine it gives them over the weakened mind of the prisoner. One of these gentlemen, speaking of this system, says, "If protracted long enough to be adequately penal, *and to give the chaplain a fair chance*, it renders the wits and will *limp and flabby*." "Minds," says another chaplain, "suddenly separated from all external associations," and, as we learn from the context, without industrial employment, "generally present at first a perfect chaos of feeling. Here solitude, compelling reflection, *soon does its work*."

Yes, but it is a work of darkness, and not of light:—

Εκ Χαιρος δ' Ερεβος τε μελαινα τε Νυξ εγενοντο.

Men of good understanding—and there are men of this stamp among prison chaplains—were not long in discovering the fearful evils likely to result from the idle discipline. "Industrial occupations under qualified masters should be provided, to such an extent as would serve to alleviate the feeling of loneliness in the cell, and to convey a knowledge of such handicrafts as would prove useful to the prisoner in after life," writes the Episcopalian chaplain of an Irish convict prison, in 1852. "My decided conviction is," writes the Presbyterian chaplain of the same prison—Mountjoy, "that the separate system adopted at Mountjoy, in cases where the health of the prisoner

will bear the discipline, has special advantages for the reformation of offenders, but only when associated with regular employment in the several trades or other occupations suited to the prisoners."

We are therefore disposed to the opinion that separate and cellular confinement, notwithstanding the objectionable adjuncts with which it has been associated, by prison empirics and pseudo-prison reformers, is the wisest and most reformatory discipline with which we are acquainted. That it is better than the lash and the treadmill we have no doubt whatever. Indeed, we very much doubt the reformatory power of the lash or treadmill at all. We accept, therefore, the separate and cellular system, when relieved by rational employment, as a safe and proper punishment. A professional thief has pronounced it "the worst kind of punishment ever adopted." A prison chaplain thinks we should read *best* for "worst."

The privacy of the cell affords the prisoner the opportunity of self-examination, and of making the acquaintance of the man with the frieze jacket. But convicts do not like to enter the "chamber of horrors" in their own hearts, or to make the acquaintance of the ZEAYTON which Socrates whispered in the ears of the men of Athens. I had a prisoner under my care in Spike Island Convict Prison, who was in the habit of starting out of sleep, and of screaming with terror at what he asserted to be the apparition of the man he had murdered. He was not more that seventeen or eighteen when he committed the murder, but I understand he was found dabbled like a young hound with the blood of his victim. When I left the prison this young panther slept in a wired cell, under the eye of a warder, for it became positively cruel to leave him to the terrors of his own imagination. He seemed on these occasions like one "possessed."

Some prisoners, after a time, begin rather to like their cells, though at first the discipline is fearfully depressing. I raised the iron cover of the "spy-hole," and looked in upon a prisoner at Mountjoy, who had murdered a night warder at Spike. The murderer was lying on the floor, picking, like a bird, at a piece of bread. There were circumstances connected with the murder which induced the late Lord Carlisle to commute the sentence of death, which had been pronounced upon Power and another, to imprisonment for life. At the time the murder was committed the prisoner was a large, broad-shouldered, muscular man; but when I had seen the change which a few months of solitary confinement had produced upon his frame, and had marked his pale, blank face, without one ray of hope to light it, I reproached myself with having done him and his companion in crime an irreparable injury by the exertions I had made to save their lives. "There they are, buried alive," I said,

“inside the walls of the jail. The *latter* part of the judge’s sentence has been carried out, at all events.”

I saw Power, in the same prison, some years after, when the separate or solitary discipline had been relaxed towards him, and he had been provided with rational employment; and made the following note on the occasion of my visit:—“The expression of Power’s face is greatly changed. It has lost its heavy, stolid, and ox-like appearance. He looks less muscular, and more intelligent. He has less of the brute, and more of the man. He has learned to read and write, and seems to take an interest in the improvement of his mind. I do not *now* regret that I aided in saving his life.”

Power evidently knew himself now, and better understood the nature of his crime. I could not but feel that the mind had become more changed than the body; though when I saw him bloody, and a good deal battered about the head, by the enraged warders, a few hours after he had committed the murder, he struck me as the most inhuman-looking villain I had ever set my eyes upon. I attributed this great change to the opportunities which he had possessed of mental and moral improvement—to the instrumentality of the chaplain and the schoolmaster.

The schoolmaster of Mountjoy makes a remark on the injurious effects of the idle discipline, which is worthy of note:—“The teaching of prisoners in the first stage is very laborious. In a great majority of cases they are in a frame of mind anything but favourable to improvement. They are fidgety, peevish, and irritable. It is a month or two before the prisoner gives his mind to instruction. It is not till the *vis inertiae* is got over that he makes any decided progress. In the first month it is least; in the last, *when he has rational employment in his cell*, it is greatest.”

As certain conditions and circumstances are favourable and others unfavourable to moral and religious improvement, such as the quiet seclusion of a cell, which enables a chaplain to deal with his man in a way in which he cannot with a mass, there is a danger of our supposing that the reformation is rather the result of the arrangement of prison machinery than of divine truth. We suspect there is a great deal of *pure materialism* afloat on this subject. We find not only hard-headed lawyers and ex-chancellors, but soft-hearted and pious-minded women, talking very foolishly of the moral effect of this and the other kind of prison discipline in annihilating crime. “*Annihilate*” is the word. With these people, not only the chaplain himself, but the chaplain’s machinery of divine truth, occupies a very secondary place indeed.

What are we to understand by the encouragement which this phase of materialism has received for the last half-dozen years? What sort of belief does it imply on the part of those who entertain

it? Plainly that prisoners may be “converted,” and made “new creatures,” by an inferior kind of agency to that which is employed in the moral reformation of other men; or that prison machinery, and new-fangled notions of “*individualization*,” are more powerful than the truths and principles of Christianity. Our prison materialists, and their enthusiastic and unwise admirers, may choose either horn of the dilemma.

There is a general impression abroad that chaplains are very easily deceived by prisoners; that if a prisoner makes a strong profession of religion, he will be able to “do the chaplain,” and get him to recommend a mitigation of the sentence, and other good things. The chaplains are never consulted as it regards a mitigation of the sentence. At one time this was the case—and it had its advantages as well as inconveniences,—but it is so no longer. The convict now understands perfectly that he has nothing to depend on but his *prison conduct* or character, which is quite a manufactured article. And in the manufacture of this article—“prison character”—we find old offenders far greater adepts than the new men. Old and confirmed thieves are, as a rule, by far the best-conducted prisoners. Indeed, their conduct is so unexceptionable, that the officers cannot but admire and respect them for it, and treat them accordingly. Their superior behaviour is carried out in every department of the prison—at church, as well as on the public works. These are the men who manage to lead the singing in church, to carry the chaplain’s Bible or Prayer-book to the desk, or to arrange his vestments. As worshippers and hearers they are most exemplary. They thoroughly understand a good sermon, and enjoy it. Let the chaplain even select the text, “*Thou shalt not steal*,” or the words, “*Let him that stole steal no more*,” they may wince a little, and acknowledge that it is all true; but, notwithstanding, they will steal again at the first favourable opportunity: “I cannot deny the truth of what you say, sir; but I cannot leave off stealing. I have been brought up to it. It is as natural to me as preaching is to you.”

There is no deception of the chaplain here, or attempt at deception; neither is there deception in the manufacture of prison character. The prisoner does what the rules of the prison require. He is obedient to his warders, submissive to the governor, respectful to the chaplains. What more can be demanded?

We do not say that prison chaplains are *never* deceived by hypocritical prisoners. All we say is, that it is not *likely* that men who have so much experience of the thousand and one dodges practised by prisoners would be often or easily deceived by a hypocritical profession of religion. Many men have tried hard, but unsuccessfully, to deceive me; but I cannot give myself much credit for cleverness in detecting the deception. Take the following instance:—

It is the business of the chaplains to read, and, if approved of, to initial, the letters which prisoners write to their friends. This correspondence between prisoners and their friends has generally a happy and wholesome effect. Prisoners, according to their classification and conduct, are allowed to write once every two or three months. A convict—a confirmed pickpocket, with the pointed nose and bright eyes of a rat, who had assumed the name of “Church,”—his proper name was “Brizzle”—got paper to write a letter to a clergyman in Enniskillen, and, after a few hours, laid before me the following pious production:—

“In consequence of your kind permission I take the liberty to trouble you with another of my ill-written letters.” [I may here observe that, as far as the writing went, the letter was excellent.] “I trust you have too much of your blessed Master’s lowly, meek spirit and humble mind to be offended with a poor, simple, ignorant creature, whose intentions are pure and sincere in writing.

“My desire is, that I, a weak vessel of His grace, may glorify His name for His goodness towards me. May the Lord direct me by His counsel and wisdom. May He overshadow me with His presence, that I may sit beneath the banner of His love, and find the consolations of His Spirit sweet and refreshing to my soul.”

Take so much as a specimen. The letter, in all its full-blown beauty, will be found in my second volume of “Life among Convicts.” In the postscript he says, “Be so kind as to send me the certificate 1124.” He was an Orangeman, and 1124 was his number.

“Church,” I said, calling the little hypocritical thief into the vestry-room.

“Well, sir,” looking self-complaisant.

“This letter won’t do.”

“Why not, sir?”

“*It is too pious!* There,” writing “Too pious” on the top of it, “go and write another.” He had copied the pious passages out of Baxter’s “Saints’ Rest,” and “The Dairyman’s Daughter.”

I never saw a little thief looking more astounded or crest-fallen. He was under the impression that no letter *could* be “*too pious*,” and that his was a *chef d’œuvre*, a masterpiece of composition and piety.

But this little rogue stuck to his profession of piety even after he had been liberated from prison. He wrote to me from Manchester, saying he had married an English girl, and had set up a pedlar’s box. He had some kind feeling towards me, notwithstanding my plain dealing with him, for he sent me a knife with a great number of blades, and three pretty Bible-markers for three of his fellow-prisoners — “Holy Bible,” for John M——; “Peace be within thy Walls,” for James P——; and “The Friend of my Heart,” for Alexander M——.

It was against the rules to deliver the markers, or messages which accompanied them, but it did not much signify, for he was very soon

back again to Spike with the friends of his heart. He is there now ; and, I have little doubt, is writing with the same unction and piety.

This Mr. James Church, or Brizzle, is the type of only a small class. The largest class among Irish convicts is composed of those whose "line" is to make "prison character," and to get drafted as quickly as possible to the convicts' paradise at Lusk, where they are in clover. As the majority of these men emigrate, we can say nothing about their permanent reformation.

But there is another class—and we believe it to be the largest class in England—who leave our convict prisons reformed ; who, remaining in England, where their relapses are known and registered, are found, in the course of nine years, to give but ten per cent. of re-convictions, and seven per cent. of revocations of licence. There were 12,332 male convicts discharged from English convict prisons from October, 1853, to December, 1862. Of these, 1,281 were re-convicted—that is, just 10·3 per cent.,—and 897 had their licences revoked, which is but 7·2 per cent. On both classes it is but 17·5 per cent. in nine years ; that is, less than two per cent. per annum.*

A great deal of infidelity prevails respecting convict reformation. An able writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* speaks of the reclamation of a regular thief as quite a hopeless affair. We would say to this writer, as St. Paul said to Agrippa, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead ?" We can point to one penitent thief, he who cried, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Thieves have hearts and consciences as well as other men. We regret the prevalence of an unbelief which is calculated to paralyze our moral and religious efforts for the reformation of this unhappy class. We cannot think so badly of even a thief's nature, as to believe its cure surpasses the power of Christianity. A *little* of the good seed will spring up in any sort of soil ; so with the poet, who has so beautifully paraphrased the prophet, we would say,—

"Sow in the morn thy seed,
At eve hold not thy hand ;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
Broadcast it o'er the land.

"Beside all waters sow,
The highways, furrows, stock ;
Drop it where thorns and thistles grow,
Scatter it on the rock.

"And duly shall appear,
In verdure, beauty, strength,
The tender blade, the stalk, the ear,
And the full corn at length."

* See Sir Joshua Jebb's last Prison Report, edited by the Earl of Chichester. London: Hatchard and Co., 187, Piccadilly. 1863.

We are happy to know that the infidelity or unbelief respecting convict reformation, of which we complain, does *not* prevail among convict chaplains. It would be terrible if it did. They preach and administer the ordinances of religion as if they believed that the words of divine truth, and the power of the divine Spirit, could change and soften human hearts. The reports of prison chaplains abound with examples of reformation of a most satisfactory kind, confirmed by the lives of convicts *after their discharge*. We could show the reader hundreds of letters from discharged convicts, and their friends and relatives, fully bearing out these statements. Some of these letters are very beautiful; but we shall confine ourselves to three short notes, written by a husband and wife after the discharge of the former:—

“REVEREND SIR,—I return you my sincere thanks for your kindness to my dear husband when he was with you; from all appearance you have won a soul from the burning. I hope God will send you a blessing for it.

“Your obedient Servant,
“_____.”

The next is from the convict himself:—

“REVEREND SIR,—I owe G——, in C——, a shilling. He is Number —. Please give him this from me, and you will much oblige your humble servant as before. May the God of grace and love give you every happiness.

“_____.”

The next letter is from both husband and wife:—

“June 23rd, 1857.

“REVEREND SIR,—I am in good health, thank God for all His goodness towards me. I received your letter with much joy to hear from you. I am working every day with Dr. C——. I shall ever mind you all my life, for the goodness you showed to me when in need. I think great long not seeing you, as indeed from what my *husband* says” (here the wife cuts in) “I cannot let your kindness out of my mind. Will I ever see you here, *was it only riding through the town!* Should this never be, may the God of peace and love rest a double portion of His Holy Spirit upon you, here and hereafter, in this life and that to come. We feel very happy since he came home.

“We remain, your sincere Friends,
“_____.”

The shilling which this poor man owed, he sent back in stamps. It was not much, but it said something for his honesty.

But what would our readers say if we told them of a discharged convict, who, of his own free will, returned property *worth many thousands*, supporting himself and family on the proceeds of an uncertain situation? We *know* of such a case, and that it was the power of truth and religion which brought about the restitution, and not prison machinery, which nearly drove him to commit suicide. The party defrauded had the option of proceeding either civilly or criminally against the person who had committed the fraud. He could not do both. Criminal proceedings were taken. The party

had his "pound of flesh." The defrauder got a sentence of six years' penal servitude; *and after that* he made over, for the interest of the prosecutor, and without his knowledge, every farthing of the property of which he was possessed. Does not this look like genuine repentance? Well, we say, *we know what we have stated to be a fact.* We could show proofs of it.

Let us give an example of another kind. If not so noble as that we have just recorded, it is far more touching. It is that of a female convict, the young wife of a respectable tradesman. In an evil hour she put forth her hand to steal. Though it was her first offence, she was sent to a convict prison, leaving an infant with her husband behind her. The disgrace she had brought upon her husband formed the burden of her sorrow. She neither wrote to nor heard of him during her imprisonment; and not daring, at its termination, to return to his house, she went into service elsewhere. Her husband heard of her discharge, and wrote to her, telling her that all was forgiven and forgotten for ever, to return to his bosom, that his love was unchanged, informing her that the first name he had taught their child to utter was that of "Mother!" She could not read the letter herself, but her mistress read it for her. She took the letter from her mistress's hand, and retired with it to her own room. As she stayed there longer than usual her mistress called her. There was no reply. She opened the door, and found her on her knees, with her husband's letter spread out, on the bed, before her. She approached and bent over her. *She was dead!*

We have heard it stated that joy never killed any one, but here is an example to the contrary. But this was a joy of which the world understands little or nothing. "Withhold Thy hand, O Lord! Thy servant can bear no more," was the exclamation of a sainted man who nearly died of joy. "Whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell," describes the condition of St. Paul when "caught up to the third heaven."

There are in England ten convict prisons (not to mention the "Refuge" at Fulham, near Putney Bridge, in which, if I mistake not, the young woman whose death I have described was domiciled), namely,—Millbank and Pentonville, separate and cellular prisons; Brixton, a female associate prison; Portland, Portsmouth, and Chatham, public works prisons; Woking and Dartmoor, invalid prisons; Broadmoor, a convict lunatic asylum; and Parkhurst, in the Isle of Wight, formerly a juvenile male, now a female prison.

Nine months is now about the average period that convicts—male or female—are kept in separate confinement. At the expiration of this period the men are sent to the public works prisons we have mentioned, where they labour in gangs, and take their meals together, according to their classification; and the women to asso-

ciate prisons, where, during a portion of each day, they sit at their needlework, at their cell doors, and *see* each other, but are not allowed to speak. This must be very tantalizing to a woman; but they meet in the work-rooms, at school, and in church.

The question of association among prisoners is one of great difficulty, and one on which we hesitate to speak very decidedly. Nothing can be better designed or conducted than our great public works prisons. The convicts work as hard and as well as the navvies outside; but the great question remains, *are they morally injured by association?* As a general rule, a convict's state of mind on entering a public works prison, after an incarceration of nine months in a separate and cellular prison, is a hopeful one. Do years of association in a public works prison nip or blight the "*picciolo*," or green leaf of promise, which had sprung up in the seclusion of the separate cell? We hesitate to answer this question, for to labour in association seems the natural state of man, and our prison machinery has hitherto worked so well—notwithstanding all the clamour that has been raised against it—that to meddle with it might be injurious. We are not fond of tinkering. But whether it might not be wise to allow the convict to *finish his imprisonment* by six, or even three months' seclusion in a separate prison, is a question worthy of consideration.

Of "ticket-of-leave" and "police supervision" we should make short work, and abolish them altogether. We think it a wise arrangement, and one of the strongest motives or incentives to good conduct, to afford a prisoner an opportunity of earning a reasonable mitigation of his sentence. Without some such motive or hope there would be no governing a large associate working prison; but let the mitigation of the sentence *be real*. Don't say to the prisoner, "You may go out of this prison, but we must keep a string on your leg and a policeman at your heel. You must say where you are going, and when you change your residence you must tell the police."

The effect of this is anything but wholesome or reformatory. It puts a convict off his parole. He feels he is not trusted,—and to trust a man is to furnish him with one of the strongest motives for reformation. There are but few so fallen who will not make an effort to do and be what they get credit for. It is on this account that Baron Holtzendorff calls police supervision "*a predestination to a career of crime.*" We cut it out, and prepare for the emergency. There is no moral reformation in machinery of this kind.

We regret to say that the tendency of legislation, at the present day, is in the direction of increased severity. There was a bill passed last session in favour of police supervision, and for abolishing sentences of three and four years, making the shortest sentence to a

convict prison five years. There is now lying before us a copy of a new prison bill, called "*A Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Law relating to Prisons*," about to be introduced by Sir George Grey, in which we again hear the sound of the "tread-wheel, shot-drill, crank, and crank pump." These gentle and reforming appliances are for our county, city, and borough prisons and jails. The Home Secretary has been at Winchester Jail (where Lord Carnarvon has been operating or experimenting on the kind of machinery just referred to), and there seems to have got a "wrinkle" or two for his new bill. We hold the Chief Secretary for the Home Department to be a most intelligent and amiable gentleman, but we believe him to be a thought too facile. He dislikes contention, and wishes to see things go easy, more especially his own bill, while passing through committee. He, in a somewhat timid way, gave up his opposition last term to police supervision, though supported in that opposition by the Lords, who are far better instructed, as it regards prison discipline, than the Commons. Had Sir George Grey persevered, the bill would have fallen through, and the labours of the Royal Commissioners have gone for nothing. We cannot say that this would have been a source of regret. The Convict Prisons bill, which became law a few months ago, contained, correctly speaking, but two clauses; one enacting police supervision over prisoners discharged on ticket-of-leave, and another making the shortest convict sentence five instead of three years.

As late as 1857 the shortest convict sentence was for *four* years; but during that year, and by the Act 16 and 17 Vict., cap. 3, the sentence was curtailed to *three* years. It hence appears that our legislators have arrived at no very fixed or definite conclusions, or they would not be shifting their ground and undoing their own work in this sort of way. But the fact is, that most of our late prison legislation has been rather the result of the pressure from without, on the part of empirics and quacks, than of calm, deliberate, and enlightened statesmanship.

We very much doubt the wisdom of increasing the length of the sentence. Of course, due respect, in the shape of punishment, must be had to the nature of the crime; but this being done, the shorter time that any man is left in the company of evil associates the better. Those who expect to convert prisoners from their evil courses by the operation of mere prison machinery—as old men and women, by passing through a mill, were at one time said to be ground young—may insist on a longer time for completing the process; but honest Christian people, who believe that genuine and real reformation can only result from the operation of divine truth and the Spirit of God on the mind, do not see the necessity of *very* long sentences.

The Government will soon be made to feel the inconvenience of

lengthening the sentence. Indeed, they feel it at the present moment, in the want of accommodation in convict prisons. There are, whilst we write, between forty and fifty convicts in Coldbath Fields Prison, who have no right to be there. It was unwise of Sir George Grey to issue something like a reprimand, regarding the overcrowding of that prison, when he had left there a number of men with convict sentences. The report of Mr. John P. Perry, on which Sir George Grey acted, is calculated to keep up the bad odour of Coldbath Fields; though the *odour* now is not from the “prisoners’ cell,” but from a sleeping-room, with a hundred and sixty beds and hammocks, lying and hanging so close together that the prison officers on guard cannot get through them, to keep order, or remain awake at night, from the operation of the noxious gas and “smell.” Read *ward* instead of *cell*, and the following lines by Coleridge will suit the Coldbath Fields of 1865 :—

“As he went through Coldbath Fields,
He saw a prisoner’s cell;
And the devil was pleased, for it gave him a hint
For improving his prison in hell.”

With the exception of a tendency to increased severity, already referred to, there is nothing objectionable, or indeed particularly new or striking, in Sir George Grey’s bill. He calls it “A Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Law relating to Prisons;” but, if we mistake not, Sir George Grey’s object, in introducing such a bill, is to assimilate, as much as possible, the discipline in all our county and borough prisons. Here we may reckon on opposition from visiting justices, who follow pretty much their own ideas of things. Indeed, we very much doubt that we are yet sufficiently instructed to lay down general and fixed laws for our prisons. More time and a little more clashing of opinion may be necessary before a final decision is arrived at. Prison discipline is still a vexed question.

HEAVEN OUR HOME.

“And they had read together a book called ‘Heaven our Home,’ which had interested him very much.”—*From “Last Hours of Prince Albert.”*

HEAVEN our Home !
 A citizen *he* hath grown
 Of that great and unseen world—
 An angel clothed with light,
 With sparkling banner furl'd,
 And a shining robe of white.

Heaven our Home !
 Then say why should we moan ?
He took the words with trust,
 And rested on them all *his* pains ;
 For he knew his God was just,
 And with Him now *he* reigns.

Heaven our Home !
 With God on His glorious throne ;
 And the Lamb for sinners slain,
 Christ Jesu ! our Lord and King,
 Saviour born to bear our pain,
 And for us salvation bring.

Heaven our Home !
 A temple with a shining dome,
 Where angels hosannas raise,
 And the swelling anthems ring ;
 Where His people meet to praise,
 Where the ransom'd sinners sing.

Heaven our Home !
 A glorious city mighty grown—
 The gates of pearl—the streets of gold ;
 With the glory of God for light ;
 The Lamb of God to watch the fold
 Of those who've won the fight.

HEAVEN OUR HOME.

Heaven our Home!

Those we love around the throne ;
 Those gone before in Jesu's train,
 The perfect spirits of the just,
 Purged from their scarlet stain,
 Wash'd of their sinful rust.

Heaven our Home!

And is this glory our own ?
 We that are so deep in sin,
 Are *we* to call the Lord of Light
 Father ! Saviour ! King !
 And see Him radiant and bright ?

Heaven our Home!

With Christ the Corner Stone.
 Life's cares and struggles past,
 In His image we shall rest ;
 All our burdens on Him cast,
 Resting ever on His breast.

Heaven our Home!

Yes, noble wife, thou'rt not alone ;
 For *he* hath trod the sparkling shore ;
 He hath stood at Jesu's shrine,
 With pride the golden lyre bore,
 Yet through all *he* still is thine.

Heaven our Home!

And unto *him* is surely known
 Thy weary weight of care and thought.
 On quiet wing, when thou dost sleep,
 He watcheth.—Hast thou not caught
 A whisper of his spirit-voice so deep ?

Heaven our Home!

Mourner, then thou art not lone,
 When *he* touches some hidden string,
 Awakes a note thou loved well ;
 Or strikes, with *his* passing wing,
 A chord from out some ancient spell.

Heaven our Home!

Not only o'er *thy* earthly throne
 Doth *his* spirit vigil keep for thee,
 But on thy heavenly seat
 Thy crown and robe are ready see !
 And *he* waiteth thee to meet.

THROUGH THE FURNACE.

Book the First.

MARTHA'S STORY.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN.

COME back out of the shadows, dear memories of my childhood. Mild faces of the loved and lost, smile upon me once more across the mist of years ; look at me, loving eyes, shining like pale stars in a dim evening sky ; softly, sadly radiant, tender as the colour of violets seen faintly through morning dew.

What is the first thing I can remember ? An old white house, with many chambers, a dear old rambling, tumble-down mansion, lying in the heart of a grassy little valley far away in Cornwall. There are people who associate the name of Cornwall with nothing but rocky ruggedness and incomprehensible miners ; but in this valley the roses and myrtle and honeysuckles climb up to the queer old chimney-stacks, and the outhouses and stables are so nearly bowers of roses.

The old white house belongs to my grandmamma, and I am living there with my sister Sophy—my pretty little sister I very often hear her called, and I begin to understand that there is some difference between us, for my grandmamma's visitors are always taking Sophy on their knees, and talking about her beautiful hair and eyes ; while, as far as I am concerned, I should be just as well without any hair and eyes, for all the notice any one takes of them.

But though I begin dimly to comprehend that my younger sister wins for herself praises and caresses that I never receive, I am exquisitely happy notwithstanding. Who could be otherwise than happy in a paradise where apple pasties and clotted cream are to be had all day long, and where I am free to roam about in gardens and orchards, where the plums are bigger and riper, and the apples rosier and sweeter, than any fruit I have ever tasted since ? Sometimes I am tired of the gardens, where I have little plots of my own, and stick cut roses and fuchsias into the mould, and wonder why they don't immediately take root and flourish ; for ah, what a little cockney I am ! and what a new thing this world of trees and flowers appears to

me as yet. Yes, there are times when I am tired of the gardens, as I suppose it is the weakness of our earthly nature to grow weary of everything, and then I play in a courtyard where there is a cat without a tail—to my mind a highly privileged animal, distinguished from all other cats by that physical peculiarity,—and a dear old blind dog called Toby, who lies flat upon his side basking in the sunshine, midway between the kitchen and the dairy, and who is always ready to accept anything nice to eat. Sometimes I sit upon the ground by his side, and we partake of newly baked biscuits in alternate mouthfuls. I suppose there were dull skies and rainy weather sometimes in that western valley, but looking back I see only cloudless blue heavens, and the summer sunlight shining on the sloping meadow-lands and tiny wandering streams. There is a trout-stream that crawls in and out of a little woody nook of the gardens, and then loses itself in an orchard; and, having heard vague talk of fish to be caught in those sluggish waters, I sometimes sit upon a rustic wooden bridge, and do a little angling with a line of packthread and a crooked pin. I believe I have dim views as to the capture of cod and salmon, such as I have seen on cool slopes of slate at a London fishmonger's, for I *am* such a cockney child, and all this out-of-door paradise, where the cawing rooks and the cooing pigeons make music all day long, is still so very new to me.

How do I come to be in Cornwall? I look down at my black frock and find the answer to that question. Papa is dead, and this is grandmamma's house, and I live here. I can recollect a long, long journey in a coach, a night arrival at a noble old inn at Exeter, two tired children awakened in the early sunlight of a summer morning, and then another long, long journey, during which the tired children are always asking, "When shall we be there?" and, pointing to every desirable habitation in the landscape, demand eagerly whether that is grandmamma's house, until depression of spirit comes upon them by reason of reiterated negatives, and they sink into discontented slumbers, from which they awake by-and-bye to find themselves nestling in the laps of aunts in a delightful parlour, and the jolting coach vanished away.

Am I sorry for papa? No; I don't think I quite know what that word sorrow means; and then papa is little more than a shadow with black whiskers, though I *have* some faint notion of myself seated on his knee and called a good little maid; but that seems half a century ago, though my black frocks are scarcely shabby yet. And I have the same faint notion of a house in London, where the rooms are dark, and, as I think, rather dirty, where there is a shabby, faded look about everything, which makes the brightness here seem so much brighter by contrast, and where I hear my nurse complain of the misery of living in lodgings. It is so long since I lost

sight of a pale, wan shadow lying on a big four-post bed in a great gloomy house, that it is only by hearsay that I know it is the shadow of my mother. I don't even know where the house was ; but sometimes when chance has taken me, on a dull summer evening, into some of the dreariest streets at the back of Manchester Square, I have been impressed with the notion of having known the neighbourhood in some previous state of existence. But of course these are later fancies, which have nothing to do with me now, while I am still a little child living in my grandmamma's house.

No, I am not sorry for papa, but I think I have an inquiring mind, for I find myself listening to my aunts when they talk about him, and I notice that they shake their heads and look very grave when they mention his name. One day I hear a male visitor say that my papa was a SCAMP ; I have not the least idea what the word means, but I guess at once that it is not right to be a scamp.

My aunts ! how much can I remember about them in these early days ? Above all, I can remember that they are kind, that they have tender, caressing hands, gentle voices, inexhaustible compassion for childish misfortunes in the way of bruised knees and grazed elbows—and, oh dear ! how many sharp angles perpetually exposed to vicissitude one seems to have in childhood ! First there is my aunt Matilda, who paints flowers on rice-paper, and embroiders wonderful chair-covers in Berlin wools and shining silks : I have only to close my eyes, and I can see her sitting in the pretty bow-windowed parlour, with her soft white hands moving about among the rainbow-coloured silks and worsteds that lie loosely scattered on a big embroidery frame. And then there is my aunt Penelope, who is of a more domestic turn of mind, and whose footsteps are always accompanied by a musical jingling of keys, and whom I associate with the mysterious delights of a delicious chamber, in which there are rows of jam pots stretching up to the very ceiling, and lemons hanging in nets, boxes of figs and chests of oranges, an actual loaf of sugar and a pair of real scales, like those in a real grocer's shop, with which it would be such enchantment to play. The scent of the myrtles blows in at an open window as I sit upon a wooden dresser watching my aunt Penelope make pound-cakes with her own pretty hands, from which she has drawn the rings that lie in a little heap of splendour that glitters in the sunlight. I ask her if I shall have rings like those when I grow up. I have an idea that the perfection of grown-up life must be such a life as my aunt leads ; and foolish as many of our childish fancies are, I do not know but that this may have been rather a sensible one.

Then, after my aunts, there is my grandmamma ; the benefactress who has taken her dead son's children under the shelter of this dear old roof ; my grandmamma, to whom, the servant who takes

charge of us has told me, I owe so much. I am afraid that I am not quite so fond of grandmamma as I ought to be under the circumstances. She is a very stately old lady, in perpetual black silk, and her lace collars and cuffs, and caps and mittens, are the most delicate things imaginable. There is a perfume about these laces and all she wears that I have never met with since ; and I fancy that faintly delicious odour might be symbolical of her pure life, which had been spent almost entirely in this happy valley, where her own sloping meadows and wide-spreading gardens encircled and shut her in from the outer world.

No, I do not love my grandmamma as dearly as I should love her, for she has Spartan notions, handed down by her mother and her mother's mother, on the management of children. She is peculiarly solicitous for "my good," and I find that my good generally involves something unpleasant. But my aunts indulge me sily, and the Spartan notions are rarely put into practice. I can remember sitting on a soft hassock in the old-fashioned fireplace, half enveloped in the silken skirts of my two aunts, while my grandmamma gravely relates certain experiences of her own childhood, which had been perseveringly made miserable, in accordance with the stony-hearted educational system popular in those good old days.

"*I* called my mother 'madam' when I took the liberty to address her," concluded my grandmamma, with intention, as the French say ; "and if I had presumed to speak without being spoken to, or to ask questions, I should have been ordered to pass the remainder of the day in my own room. Little girls, in *those* days, were not allowed to sit idly upon carpets, staring at the fire. We had our tasks, and our samplers, and our plain needlework, when *I* was a child, and the day was scarcely long enough for what we had to do. At the age of nine I was able to make a shirt from the side-seams to the button-holes."

Such speeches as these were apt to exercise a depressing influence upon me for some moments, during which I mused despondently on my own shortcomings ; but I think my grandmamma was satisfied with the enunciation of these awful discourses, and was very willing that I should be petted by my aunts, inasmuch as the errors arising from pernicious indulgence afforded her ample grounds for solemn reprobation.

And this was my grandmamma, from whose mild blue eyes no angry lightnings had ever shone, and whose tender nature made her the victim of every tramp and beggar, every sham sailor and smooth-tongued gipsy who found his way to her gate. I smile now as I think of the gentle creature whom I feared ; but in those days I had an implicit faith in the severity of her intentions with regard to me.

What else can I remember? My uncle Hugh, who comes to dinner every Sunday. He is my grandmamma's favourite son, and I see him walking slowly by her side along the wide walk in the flower-garden, deferential and devoted. Do I know that it is a very beautiful sight to see them thus? I am not quite sure about that; but I know that I love my uncle Hugh very dearly, and that he gives me a new shilling sometimes before he mounts the bay horse that carries him to and fro between my grandmamma's house and the town in which he practises as a solicitor. One summer Sunday evening comes back from amongst all the other Sundays, and I see the bay horse standing by the open glass door of a little lobby, champing the tender young shoots of a rose tree that shelters the porch. My uncle carries my sister Sophy on his shoulder, and I am clinging to his coat, when I hear him say to my aunts, as if in continuation of some conversation that I had not heard,—

“No, there was nothing saved out of the wreck, not a sixpence. Poor little children!”

I know the meaning of that word wreck; and I ask my aunt Matilda by-and-bye if there has been a ship lost on the coast, and poor little children drowned. But she only looks at me with surprise in her pretty blue eyes, and asks me what put such a foolish notion in my head.

And now of all the people who were dear to me in that early time there remains the dearest of all, my sister Sophy. Oh, my darling, how amongst all the other images your image comes back, brighter and more beautiful than the rest, like some solitary star shining steadily in a heaven whose lesser lights have only a fitful glory! My beautiful pet, how poor and common my words seem when they try to shape themselves into you!

Yes, she shines upon me out of the past. Across the trackless years I see her to-day as I remember her in this early time, a fair-haired child with wondering blue eyes, and the sweetest voice that ever made childish words into music. I can see her again. She is three years younger than I—little more than half my age, and I carry her in my arms sometimes. When I look in the cheval glass in my aunt Matilda's room, what do I see? A dark-faced, ungainly girl of seven holding a child-angel. I am only seven, and yet I think I begin to know that it is rather a sad thing not to be pretty. Ah, yes, I know it; and all that my grandmamma can say about the supreme beauty of handsome doings as compared to handsome lookings cannot quite hinder a little pang shooting through my heart when I hear a visitor say one day, “Yes, certainly, Miss Penelope, your little Sophy is the loveliest darling I ever saw, and poor Martha is a very sweet child too, but compared to her sister, so unfortunately plain!”

CHAPTER II.

O U R C O U S I N.

WHAT can I remember next? Two little white-curtained beds glimmering in the dusky morning; two happy girls dressing before an old-fashioned looking-glass in a rustic window, and beyond the window an old walled garden, with soft grass and homely flower beds, and just one sheltered nook shadowed by a sycamore and a mulberry tree, where it is so pleasant for Sophy and I to sit in the long summer days with our work and books.

This is no longer Cornwall. The happy valley has melted away into the past, vanished like the shadows of my father and mother—as much a shadow now as the big gloomy house in the unknown regions behind Manchester Square. Our grandmamma is dead—I say *our* grandmamma advisedly, for my sister Sophy is a personage now instead of a beautiful plaything or a child-angel, and there is nothing I have in the world that I do not share with her. So I almost fancy the pronoun *my* will disappear henceforward out of the record of my life. Our grandmamma is dead; a sweet and peaceful end has closed one of the purest lives that ever elevated womanhood into saintliness. My aunts have married. The inevitable change which comes to all things upon earth has come to the dear old house under the shelter of the myrtles and woodbine. Strangers inhabit there now; and the feet of strange children patter up and down the passages in which I used to walk with my sister Sophy in my arms.

We are no longer children; Sophy is seventeen and I am twenty-one, and we live with our uncle, Geoffrey Champion, rector of Sandy-coast. I know my father's history now; and I know to my sorrow that it is one record of folly and extravagance; though tenderness and ineffable compassion have softened every word in which that story has been told to me. I know that my father's death left his two children as entirely destitute as any helpless paupers who ever shivered waiting for admission at a workhouse gate; and I know that the same Providence whose decree left us fatherless raised up for us a second father in the person of my uncle Geoffrey.

I scarcely know how we came to be adopted by this dear uncle: for there are some people whose goodness is so quiet a virtue that it comes at last to be accepted as a matter of course by those who benefit by it—like the sunshine which makes earth so beautiful for us, and which we yet regard as such a common thing, only grumbling piteously now and then when the sky is dull. My uncle adopted us, and from the hour in which he first brought us to his house until the

mournful day in which I left it, no sense of obligation ever clouded my happy confidence in his love.

Perhaps the little town of Sandycoast is one of the dullest and quietest spots in England, and yet, Heaven knows, it was never dull to me. There was a grave, calm peacefulness of aspect in the place which reminds me somehow of little fragments here and there amongst Mr. Tennyson's poetry—a cool, shadowy grace which is less gorgeous than beauty, and infinitely sweeter. Yes, I love the dear old place with its crooked streets, and clumsy gateways, its empty market-place and narrow river, licking the outskirts of the town and crawling slowly towards the dim, grey sea which makes the boundary line of our quiet world. Sandycoast is near the sea, and yet is not a sea-side town, and no buff-slippered foot of cockney visitor has ever trodden on its rugged pavements. Sometimes—once in six months perhaps—some wandering tourist with a taste for architecture comes to spend a morning in our grand old churches; for Sandycoast was an important place once, and Roman galleys have floated proudly on that sluggish river where the coal barges now lie lazily at anchor by the stone archway at the end of our high street. For the rest, a solemn quiet pervades the place, and on a rainy day you could almost count the drops as they fall pattering on the stones below the rectory windows.

St. Augustine's Rectory my uncle's house is called, the dearest old house in all the world, as I think, though by no means imposing of aspect to the passers by. In the narrow street St. Augustine's Rectory only exhibits a wall, whose blankness is solely broken by two low casement windows and a narrow oaken door; and yet, oh, what a comfortable dwelling-place it is within! what dear old passages, and scraps of winding stair, and ups and downs, and ins and outs pervade it from cellar to garret! and what a cosy homeliness there is in every chamber,—from the drawing-room, where I see the same old Chelsea china shepherdesses and painted hand-screens that I remember when I first came to Sandycoast twelve years ago, to the long, low room which Sophy and I call ours, where there are projecting windows that overhang the garden, and oaken window-seats deep enough to hold quite a small library of our favourite volumes.

I am one-and-twenty; quite—quite—quite a woman—almost old, I think, for it seems so long since I first twisted my hair into a knot at the back of my head and wore a dress that touched the ground. I feel ever so old, as I sit amongst the chintz-covered cushions in our favourite window, and talk with my sister Sophy.

The child-angel has grown into the loveliest girl whose sweet face ever beamed out of an encircling halo of golden hair; and I love her, ah, how passionately! with a love which has something morbid in its intensity; for if her face looks palely at me for

a day or two, I am seized with a panic, and think that she is going to die.

But to-day we are very happy, for it is a grand day in the simple history of our lives. My uncle's only son is coming home from travels that have lasted four years; and oh, what long, long years they have seemed, unbroken by the low music of Bernard Champion's earnest voice, unillumined by that calm smile, whose like I have never seen except in an Italian picture, which stern art-critics have told me was *not* painted by Raffaele!

Yes, Bernard has been away four years. He left us when his university career had come to its honourable and triumphant close; he left us as much elevated by success as a man can be who is so entirely a Christian as to be almost above the common triumph that attends success, or the common bitterness that waits on failure. I think the pleasure he felt in his university honours had very little relation to himself, but oh! it was unutterably sweet to see the father's pride in his only son, his only child, the sole representative of a wife who had died just a week before the first anniversary of her happy wedding day.

Let me go back to that midsummer day on which my cousin came back to us, and write of it as a day standing alone, distinct from all other days, one happy standpoint in the history of my life, which holds its brightness in itself, and needs no tender glow from the memory of the past, no magical sunlight from the hopes and dreams of the future. It is so seldom that we live quite in the present, but that day I think the veriest dreamer would have been content to exist in the waking happiness of the moment.

My cousin Bernard had been my friend and companion during the vacations which he spent at Sandycoast, and whatever little stock of learning I possessed had been gathered with his help. My sister and I had been educated in the usual manner by a daily governess, and we sang a little, and played a little, and drew a little, and talked French, and Italian, and German a little, after the manner of other young ladies in my uncle's parish. Whatever I had learned beyond the ordinary schoolgirl routine I had learned from my cousin Bernard, or the books he lent me. I had taken charge of his library while he was away in the desert, under the steady stars that look down upon the trackless Nile; and oh, what a happiness it had been to dust and arrange the pretty little chamber every day, every day; until it seemed as if the big folios and tiny duodecimos, the morocco despatch-box and massive inkstand, the line engravings by Raffaele and Albert Durer, were so many living things, which must have pined and perished had I forgotten to tend them!

And now he was coming home, and I should be his companion once more, just the same as in the dear old days. Always, always

now, with no sad partings to break the tranquil happiness of our home, for my cousin was to be ordained, and was to preach his first sermon at St. Augustine's—the biggest and grandest of my uncle's two churches. He was to live near us for some years to come. This was the happiness to which my uncle Geoffrey had looked forward, as the realization of his simple ideal of perfect bliss. Was it strange that I loved my cousin when to love and praise him was to give my uncle the only tribute he cared to receive? Is it strange that I set no check on my affection when it could thus shape itself into gratitude for the goodness of my more than father? But I doubt if I ever thought seriously of these things. The same fond pride that might have filled my heart on hearing the triumphs of a brother, filled my heart now when I heard people praise my cousin. And if beyond that there was——no, I will not think of that now; it was only afterwards that the cruel truth came home to me, and I knew how foolish I had been.

Let me think of myself as I was that day, happy amid the general happiness around me, unconscious of anything but a sister's joy in a dearly loved brother's return.

I sat with my sister in our favourite window while she knelt upon the oaken seat, half in and half out of the casement, with her arms resting on the sill, and her head lying lazily upon those round white arms, the sunny curls faintly stirred by a warm summer breeze.

"I wonder what he will be like, Patty?" she said, dreamily; for it was growing late in the afternoon, and the long day's idleness and expectation had tired her.

"Like what he used to be, darling, I hope; I don't think he could change for the better."

My sister pursed up her lips thoughtfully.

"Was he handsome when he went away?"

"Why, you must remember him, Sophy."

"Oh yes, I remember him well enough, but I don't think I quite know whether he was handsome. You see, I was only thirteen, and one has such silly notions at thirteen." My sister said this with the tone of a Methuselah. "Tell me what he was like, Patty; do, please. I want some one to tell me something, if it's only because I'm so hungry, and Jane says I mustn't eat anything before dinner. Such a dinner: she was whipping creams and making all sorts of things this morning; though you can't call the Lesters and my cousin Bernard a party. Tell me what he was like when he went away, Patty. First and foremost, I know he has grey eyes."

"With long black lashes."

"That curl upwards. Yes, I remember the black lashes, and the eyes very often look black, only they have more light in them than

real black eyes; and his nose is aquiline, like the nose of the marble bust in Mr. Lester's hall—the warrior type of nose, Mr. Lester says; and he is tall and dark—a sallow kind of darkness, that has rather a foreign look; and he is very strong, for I can recollect how he used to carry me on his shoulder when I was ever such a big girl. And that's all I can remember about him. I think, somehow, he will look more like a soldier than a clergyman. He isn't a bit like Mr. Vandyce, of Hallow's Green, who has such a low voice, and such gentle manners, and always seems as if he had such a dreadful weight upon his mind. But please tell me all about Bernard."

"What can I tell you beyond what you know, darling? You know how good he is—you know how clever he is."

My sister made a little wry face.

"Oh, Patty," she cried, "the very idea of his cleverness frightens me; and yet he must have been very kind to us, I think, for I can't remember being frightened of him when I was a child."

Frightened of him! I told my sister what a tender friend and kinsman Bernard Champion had been to us, and how little need there was for a shadow of fear to darken our thoughts of him. We sat in the window talking of him till the hands of the little watch my uncle had given me pointed to half-past five, and then Sophy skipped away to the looking-glass to arrange her pretty curls for the last time before we went down to the drawing-room. I sat lazily watching her as she stood before the glass with those abundant curls falling in a rippling rain of gold about her white shoulders. The child-angel had grown into the loveliest girl I had ever seen, and to look at her seemed like contemplating a wonderful masterpiece of the painter's art; one could scarcely look without discovering some fresh beauty, some newer and more subtle charm of colour or expression.

We went down-stairs together by-and-bye, and found my uncle in the drawing-room, walking up and down with his watch in his hand, waiting for his son. He looked at us with a pleased smile.

"My darlings are dressed for a festival," he said; "Bernard will scarcely know you two tall girls for the cousins he left behind him four years ago."

The glass over the chimney-piece reflected us as we stood near my uncle. Two figures in simple white dresses, of the same height, but oh, how different in all else!—one fair and slim as a tall white lily, the other dark-browed and clumsy. Just one sharp twinge of the old pain that I had felt when I was a child shot through my heart, and then I remembered how good every one was to me, and what a happy life I led in a world where so many innocent creatures were sorrowful. I had not much time to think of myself, for in the next moment there was the sound of a carriage stopping, a loud ringing of the bell, and then a general rush into the hall. My cousin Bernard was

amongst us again, taller, bigger, and darker than when he had left us, and with the soldier-like aspect which Sophy had spoken of, heightened by his thick beard and bronzed skin. He took us both in his arms, and pressed our foreheads lightly with his bearded lips, and then he held out both his hands to his father, and led him away into the little study which had been so long my sacred care, and which was odorous to-day with the old china bowl of roses I had set on the table to welcome my cousin home. Bernard closed the door behind him. That first meeting between father and son was very sacred, and my sister and I went back to the drawing-room, and composed ourselves for the reception of my uncle's friends—Mr. Lester, the banker of Sandycost, and his two pretty daughters. They were announced while my uncle and Bernard were still in the little study, and Sophy and I had to answer their eager questions about the returned traveller. Bernard was a very great favourite with the banker. The young man shared many tastes with his elderly friend. Both were ardent workers in the cause of the weak and poor, eager wrestlers onward in the mighty march of progress, faithful believers in the latent fount of goodness lying somewhere in the rocky depths of every man's heart, and only needing one magical touch from the real Aaron's rod to unloose its frozen waters.

My cousin Bernard came in presently with his father, and there was a pleasant meeting of old friends. My uncle looked younger and brighter to-day than he had looked for many long days ; for that dear uncle's declining health was the one phase under which I knew sorrow, and my strongest hope for his perfect restoration lay in Bernard's influence.

We strolled out into the garden after dinner—Agnes and Lucy Lester, Bernard, Sophy, and I—while the banker and my uncle, staunch Tories both, talked politics between slow, thoughtful sips of some very wonderful port, which I took the liberty to consider rather nastier than inferior vintages. We loitered up and down the one broad gravel walk, and my cousin told us some of his adventures in that fair land of holy traditions and divine memories whence he had so lately come. He was very grave ; the frank, boyish cheeriness of spirit, which I remembered so fondly in my kinsman, seemed to have departed from him ; and I watched his sombre face regretfully as he walked slowly to and fro, talking very gravely of his Eastern travels.

I discovered the reason of this change by-and-bye ; for when Sophy and the Miss Lesters were leaving the garden, Bernard laid his hand upon my arm,—

“Stop with me a little longer, Patty ; I want to talk with you.”

I obeyed him, as I had always obeyed him, with a childish trust

in his superior wisdom, a child's reverential love of the most perfect creature I knew.

"Patty, my father is very much altered."

I started. Ah, there was an alteration, then, though I had so tried to believe that my uncle's illnesses had been only passing troubles, that left no mark behind.

"Oh, Bernard, do you really see a change in him? He was ill in the winter, but we hoped he was quite himself again now, and we thought that your return would work wonders. It will do so, please God; he has looked forward to it so fondly, cousin."

That word cousin was the next best name to brother, and I always felt a sense of protection when I called Bernard Champion thus. Yes, I think there was some wisdom in Sophy's fancy, and he ought to have been a soldier. Alone with him in a besieged fortress—famine inside the walls and a host of foes without,—one would have felt safer than in the midst of a battalion of meaner men.

"He has looked forward to my coming," said my cousin, tenderly. "Ah, Patty, Heaven knows so have I; but when I thought of the deep joy of our meeting, I never dreamt that the smile with which he greeted me would be fainter and weaker than his old smile. Oh, my dear, you do not know, you cannot understand, the love there is between my father and me; and yet, perhaps it is the kind of love that only a woman *can* understand. I am to read the word of God under yonder spire, and I had need to be a Christian, Patty; but Heaven help the man who hurts my father, for I think I should be terribly like a pagan to him."

A dark change passed over his face in the pale summer moonlight, and then he turned to me with a sweet, sad smile.

"Oh, my dear little cousin, my sisterly little cousin," he said, "what weak creatures we must be, when, after consecrating our lives to the service of God, we think it so hard a thing that those we love should go to Him a few years before us! Will the Psalmist's words *never* come home to us, that we waste so much of our care on the life which is only like a tale that is told? We stand on the sea-shore sadly watching the low clouds that darken our narrow horizon, and forget that there is a fairer land on the other side of that dreary ocean. Heaven help me! yonder, among the palm-crowned mountains where He lived and suffered, I taught myself to believe that I had put my hand upon the plough, and should be brave enough to follow it to the end; but there is no heathen creature upon this earth who could feel a selfish human sorrow more than I feel mine."

He had said all this in a low voice, but there was a concentrated passion in his tone and manner which was peculiar to him when he was deeply moved. It was not until long after this that I came to analyze my cousin's character; but I did come to know it, as I think,

very thoroughly. It was a passionate nature, impulsive and ardent as that of the veriest sinner who ever went headlong to his ruin. It was the nature of a man who, with all his fellow-man's capability for evil as well as good, chose the right, and held to it by force of his own iron will, sustained by an unquestioning faith in spiritual things. Bernard Champion was a man who had seen the face of Satan, and had seen it looking up at him, dark with baffled fury, as he set his foot upon the breast of the fiend, and passed onward upon the path he had elected to tread.

We walked up and down the garden from end to end, under the shadow of the old wall, for some little time in silence. The elder blossoms smelt faintly sweet in the still evening air. Ah, how peaceful it all was! and yet we two were so sorrowful, and the day that had been so happy ended in sadness.

"Patty," said my cousin by-and-bye, "neither you nor I can hinder the working of God's will, but between us we may make our father's life happy. I think you love him as well as if he really were your father, eh, Patty?"

As well! The sudden tears choked my utterance for a minute, and then I answered him:

"He is more than a father to me, Bernard," I said; "a father's love is the payment of a debt of duty. His has been a free gift."

"And you will never vex him, dear? *I* can bear sorrow and trouble, but I sometimes think my father's heart was broken long ago when my mother died, and that his existence since then has been, at best, only a sacrifice. I want to mould my life for his pleasure, Patty. I know the cherished wish of his simple heart; God grant I shall be able to gratify it. How lovely your sister has grown!"

The sudden change from one subject to another startled me, and yet there had been no change of tone. Bernard spoke of Sophy as if the thought of her had grown out of that other thought about his father.

"Yes," I answered, proud of his praise, "she is very lovely." "A fragile, poetical kind of loveliness," said my cousin, thoughtfully, "a loveliness that will scarcely bear translation into words; the outward expression of a nature that is badly adapted for the wear and tear of this world, I should think, poor little girl!"

He spoke of her with a thrilling tenderness in his voice. Did I grudge her his praises? Did I envy this glorious gift of beauty in the sister I loved? Oh no, no — again and again, no! But all at once, while he was speaking, a dull, sickly chill came over me, that was worse than pain. For all the world I could not have answered him just then, and it seemed an inexpressible relief when Mr. Lester came out into the garden to look for his daughters.

CHAPTER III.

“IS IT WELL TO WISH THEE HAPPY?”

THE days crept quietly by in the dear old house. Bernard left us for a little while, when he went away to be ordained, and then returned to begin his holy career as curate in our own quiet Sandycoast. My uncle's face brightened under the influence of his son's presence, and new hopes grew up in all our hearts. Perhaps those few months of a sweet calm comprised the happiest period of my womanhood. I read and studied with my cousin; I executed all his little plans for the comfort of our poor, and between us we contrived to lighten my uncle's labours, which hitherto had been very heavy; for his last curate had been a frivolous young man, who thought more of his white hands and his rounded periods than of the work to be done amongst an ignorant population of fishermen and agricultural labourers. Now my uncle felt what it was to have an earnest man for his coadjutor, and strong shoulders pushed against the wheel which was so slow to move. Before the first three months of his service came to an end, my cousin Bernard had contrived to make his presence felt in Sandycoast. The people were afraid of him, but they liked him. They liked his genial presence, his deep, hearty voice, his quick decision, his inexhaustible power of argument, his wealth of irony, now playful as the gambollings of a Puck, now cutting sharp and deeply home into the heart of some foul ulcer, like the knife of a skilful surgeon. Yes, the people liked him as thoroughly as they feared him. He was powerful; and I fancy that the weaker we are ourselves, the more readily we throw ourselves at the feet of anything that represents power. Are there not hapless heathen creatures who cast themselves beneath the car of Juggernaut, only because the idol is big and strong?

So already the steady march of progress began to be visible in Sandycoast. Drunkards, who had defied my uncle's mild remonstrances, did not like to be seen slinking out of a public-house on a Sunday afternoon by Bernard Champion; slip-shod women, who had laughed to scorn the rector's gentle hints at amendment, winced under the lash of the curate's ridicule, and little by little the hearth came to be swept and the Windsor chairs laboriously polished, in order that Mr. Bernard might find a comfortable seat when he dropped in for a chat. And then, if he was apt to deal sharply with drunken reprobates and silly slatterns, everybody knew that, with the sick and the feeble, he could be as tender as a woman, as compassionate as an angel. It was my happiness to help him in his work; and oh, how proud I felt of this strong soldier of the church militant!

My sister sometimes tried to help me in my rounds amongst my uncle's parishioners, but the fragile nature, with which her fragile beauty harmonized so exquisitely, shrank wounded and sorrowful from the sight of so much sorrow. Sophy was morbidly sensitive: and when I found her waking, in the dead of the night, from some confused dreams of the sorrowful things she had witnessed and heard of in the day, I determined that she should never again encounter the miseries which my stronger and ruder nature was better fitted to cope with. My poor darling was so anxious to help me that I was obliged to appeal to Bernard, whose authority was supreme upon all subjects in St. Augustine's Rectory.

But even after this appeal Sophy would scarcely be persuaded to abandon all share in our work.

"It seems so hard that I should be of no use to any one in this world," she said, pleadingly. "Oh, Bernard, if you knew what a poor, weak, selfish creature I feel when I sit in the garden on a sunny morning, reading a novel, while you and Patty are away doing all sorts of good for the relief of miserable people! and you know, Bernard," she continued, with her soft eyes lifted earnestly to his face, "sorrow may come to me some day, as well as to all these poor people, and I shall have no power to run away from it then."

My cousin looked at her with unspeakable tenderness. "God give you a strong shelter in the day of your sorrow, my darling," he answered, gently. It was so much his habit to treat my sister like a child, that even such little tender speeches as these were slow to awaken me to the truth. It was so much this strong man's nature to love the weakest things, that I looked on his affection for Sophy as a matter of course. And then I loved her so dearly, my beautiful, trusting, clinging darling, who, from the very first, had awakened in my breast a love which was almost as deep as a mother's adoration of her one fatherless child.

Ah, well, the day came very soon when I was to discover for the first time the selfishness and wickedness of my nature. Ah, how sad it seemed to have lived among good people all my life, and to know the gospel by heart, and yet to be so weak and sinful a creature after all! The agony of that day comes back upon me all at once as I write: across half a lifetime the old pain comes back, almost as sharply terrible as when I felt it first; it returns to-day, as it will twenty years hence if I live so long; as it has returned to me sometimes, when I have been calm and happy in the midst of happy people, conjured into sudden life by the magic of some chance association.

My cousin Bernard had been with us nearly six months, and it was winter weather, dull and bleak and windy; but oh, such pleasant weather for a sturdy battle with hard duties in the day, and a sybarite

rest in a cosy nook by a happy fireside in the evening. Christmas was close at hand, and Sophy and I had been working all day long, and every day for a week and more, at the decoration of my uncle's two churches. The work pleased my darling, for it gave her some opportunity of demonstrating the grateful affection with which her heart overflowed; and the slender little hands had done good service in the intertwining of evergreens, and the pretty white fingers had been cruelly wounded with the thorns upon the holly boughs. She was tired out at last, when our work was finished, and sat on a low stool at my feet by the fire in the dusky drawing-room in that pleasant hour which comes before a six o'clock dinner in December.

She was sitting at my feet, with her head resting lovingly upon my knee, and her face quite hidden by her tangled curls. She had thrown her bonnet and shawl upon the sofa after coming in from the church, and had sat down in her dark merino morning dress, and with her hair disordered by the day's work; but as she stood before me for a moment in the fitful firelight, I thought she looked prettier with that loosely falling hair and sombre brown dress than in the gayest or brightest costume I had ever seen her wear. But just now I could not see her face; I only saw the wealth of falling hair, and two little hands trifling nervously with a slender gold chain, twisting it in and out, in and out, amongst the tremulous fingers.

"You are nervous and tired, my dear," I said, "and I think you have worked too hard to-day; but there was never such an energetic, ambitious little puss, always anxious to do three times as much as anybody else. Bernard shall scold you if you don't take care." She did not answer me, but only repeated my cousin's name softly, as if there had been something strange in the sound of it to-night.

"Bernard, Bernard, do you think it's a pretty name, Patty?"

"I don't know, darling. I like it better than any other name, because it means him."

"I don't understand you, Patty."

"I dare say I'm talking nonsense, dear; but I can't separate the name from the man who bears it. If I were to go away into some foreign land, divided from you all, and hear some stranger called by the name, I think the pain would almost kill me. How should I know whether it is what people call a pretty name? I don't suppose Sandycoast is what people would call a pretty place; but I know that if I were to come back to it after a long absence it would shine upon me like a vision of heaven."

"And Bernard," she said, softly, "you like him very much, Patty? you think him very good?"

"My darling, everybody knows his goodness."

She gave a little sigh, and the tremulous fingers twisted and untwisted the chain ever so many times before she spoke again.

"Patty," she said, "I want to tell you something."

She put up her hand, and the loving fingers twined themselves about mine. Did I know what she was going to tell me? I think I did. I think the pain began even then; but I have heard of people falling from a height and violently hurt, who on recovering could not remember anything that happened just before they fell. I have only a confused recollection of what went before my sudden agony.

"Bernard and I are going to be married," said my sister; and then, when I started and shrank shivering away from her, she cried eagerly,—

"Oh, not for a long while, Patty darling; not for more than a year; and even then, when I am married, you and I are not to be parted. Bernard knows how dearly we love each other. My own dear sister, I wouldn't leave you for all the world. It was almost the first thing I said to him, dear, when he asked me to be his wife; and he told me that he had never meant to be less than a brother to you. 'Our home shall be Patty's home,' he said, 'till she leaves it to make some good man's home happy,—all her life, if the fortunate man never comes; and we shall not be eager to bid him welcome, shall we dear?' He said those very words, Patty."

"He is very good."

I dropped my face upon her curls, and let it lie there hidden in the tangled hair. There were no tears in my eyes, but I think a low wail broke from my lips as the truth came upon me all at once. I loved him, I loved him; all my life, since I could remember, had taken its colour from him. He was so much a part of my life, that until this moment I had never known *what* he was to me; but the one great agony of my existence came suddenly upon me, and passed away. For a little while I was a wicked and hateful creature, envious of the happy destiny which had given my sister this man's love; but presently I felt the soft arms clinging round my neck, and the darkness had passed away.

"God bless you, my darling," I said. "He has given you the best and purest of all earthly treasures, the love of a good man."

"Yes, he is very good," she murmured, in a slow, thoughtful way. "I wish I were worthier of so good a man."

"And you love him, Sophy?"

"How can I help loving him when he is so good? Yes, Patty, I love him dearly, and am very grateful for his love. And then, dear, he told me that it was our uncle's wish that he should marry one of us—an old wish—an old plan formed when we were only children. 'I cannot leave them a fortune, Bernard,' he said, 'I want to leave them at least a protector.'"

"Dear uncle!"

"And Bernard says he will be so pleased by our marriage; and I

hope you will be pleased, Patty. I would not for all the world do anything to vex you."

"Vex me, my pet, by your marriage with a good man? Can anything vex me that will secure happiness for you?"

"Yes, I am sure I shall be happy with him. He is so good."

The secret in my own heart should have taught me to read hers better than I did. If I could have truly read that innocent heart, how much pain, how much anguish might have been spared! There would have been sorrow, perhaps, but only a gentle sorrow as compared with what came afterwards.

"It was all so sudden, Patty," said my sister presently, "that I think, even if I had not known and loved my cousin as I do, that I should have been startled into saying Yes. You remember when Bernard came into St. Augustine's this afternoon while we were decorating the font? You left us, you know, dear, to pay the old women their club money, and while you were in the vestry my cousin began to talk to me. I was standing with the last of our garlands in my hand, very tired, and Bernard was leaning against the font, looking down at me with those awfully searching grey eyes of his, which would turn my heart cold if I were very wicked. I can't remember what words he used, Patty, or how he came upon the subject so suddenly, and yet quite naturally, as it seemed, but I know that all at once he was telling me that he loved me, and had set his heart on winning my love. He did not tell me of my uncle's wish until afterwards, and then he said, 'Remember, Sophy, however sacred this wish may be to me, it must not turn the scale by so much as a feather's weight. I love you too dearly to accept less than your love, freely given, for myself alone. You are so young that any error as to this matter would be fatal. Unless you can give me all your heart, Sophy, give me your hand now and be only my friend and sister from this time forward. I am strong enough to bear a disappointment, and you shall never be reminded of what I have told you to-day. You must think how solemn a question this seems to me, when I ask it in such a sacred place.' It was something like this that he said to me, as we stood by the font. He spoke very earnestly, but with that proud manner which he has sometimes. He wasn't a bit like a lover in a novel, and I think if I had said No, he would have taken it as quietly as the most commonplace answer to a commonplace question. And yet, Patty, I do believe he loves me very dearly."

"And you love him, darling?"

"How can I help loving him," she asked again, simply, "when he is so good? And now come and dress, Patty. It must be nearly six o'clock."

We found our candle on a table in the hall, and lighted it at

the hall lamp. That one candle only made a little spot of light in our long low room, so my sister did not see my face until I had bathed my head and eyes with cold water, and rearranged my hair. Our toilets were very simple; the brown merino dresses were changed for black silk, the plain linen collars of the morning gave place to smarter collars of worked muslin, and that was all. Never since we had been under my uncle's roof had we known what it was to ask him for anything. Whatever a man in his position would have given his daughters he gave to us, unasked; and the children of a duke could not have been more inexperienced in anything like worldly difficulty than we were. It was by his particular desire that we always dressed alike, and the variation of so much as a scrap of ribbon would have vexed him. We found him standing on the hearth in the drawing-room, looking radiant with happiness, and I guessed at once that Bernard had told him all about the interview in the church. He held out his arms as we went towards him, and took us both to his breast—that noble breast on which my sister Sophy had slept so peacefully long ago during our journey from Cornwall to Sandycoast.

“My darlings,” he said, “I have nothing left to wish for in the world. My little fair-haired baby!” He laid his hand on my sister's curls, and smoothed them tenderly away from the innocent, blushing face. “It seems so short a time since Bernard came with all his toys to lay at your feet on the night I brought you home. I wonder whether he loved you then, Sophy? one hears such romantic stories about love at first sight.”

And then he turned to me, with a bright smile on the genial face that never had been darkened by so much as one passing storm-cloud of passion.

“I suppose you and I are to keep house together when these two birds have set up a nest of their own, eh, Patty?”

But my sister cried out eagerly,—

“Oh no, Patty and I must never be parted; and I can't part from you either, uncle Geoffrey. Must married people always go away and live by themselves? Why can't Bernard be your curate for ever so many years, uncle, and our dear old home unbroken? If you knew how happy I have been here, you would never be so cruel as to talk of my going away.”

“But Bernard is not a man to stop long in such a place as Sandycoast. He is fitted for a wider field, my pet; and wherever Bernard is, Bernard's wife will be happy.”

My cousin came in presently, and the conversation drifted into other channels. After dinner we sat round the fire talking, Sophy and I side by side, my uncle half buried in his great arm-chair, my cousin Bernard sitting in the corner with his face darkened by the

shadow of the broad chimney-piece. We talked a great deal, or I should say, rather, they talked; for I was content to sit very quietly with Sophy's fair head resting on my shoulder, and her hand linked in mine. They talked of the future, and all that was bright and enthusiastic in my cousin's mind appeared on the ascendant to-night. There was a little confusion in my thoughts as I listened to them; a little difficulty in keeping hold of time and place, and even of my own identity; a little likeness in my sensations to those of some benighted wretch lost on the moors, who hears the faint chime of his native village bells grow fainter in the thickening snow, and knows that he can never reach the home that lies so near.

My life was over: my own individual life and its one great joy must be buried together in the same grave. Ah, what a weak and foolish creature I must have been! What hope had I ever had? what treasure had I lost? No hope, no treasure. Only a dim, shapeless dream, which had melted away all at once and left me desolate. Desolate, with my sister's soft hand clasped in mine; desolate, with the dearest and truest kindred who ever sheltered an orphan in her helplessness. On my knees that night I acknowledged my sinful weakness, my base ingratitude. On my knees that night I wrestled with my sorrow, and Heaven gave me help in the battle, for I rose with peace in my heart, and the tears that flowed so silently in that still winter night were not altogether bitter.

I looked at myself in the glass the next morning, and smiled at the reflection of my own plain, homely face, and homelier figure. "Just the sort of person for a maiden aunt," I thought; and I fancied myself, in the years to come, sitting in the pleasant firelight telling fairy stories to Sophy's children.

Henceforward I have little to say of myself. My story is only a chronicle of the lives with which my own life has been intertwined; a story of human weakness and human sorrow, but the sorrow and the weakness of mortal creatures who, when earth's fires were fiercest, and the burden of humanity heaviest, still carried in their breasts—too often flickering and unsteady, but quenchless to the last—the one spark of that glorious light which linked them with the Divine.

CHAPTER IV.

NEW FACES.

THE change in Sophy's relations with my cousin Bernard made no change in my sister herself. She was still the same simple, loving creature, with an almost childish dependence upon other people, a morbidly sensitive desire for the approbation of those she

loved. Knowing her as I did, and loving her as I did, it would have been strange if I had been altogether free from that anxious watchfulness, those vague fears, which wait upon all earthly affections. She was so dear to me, so beautiful in her confiding love, her innocent truthfulness, that it was very difficult to remember she was not quite perfect. But there were times when some trivial circumstance, too insignificant to be recorded, awoke me to the sense of the something wanting in her character. What was it? Firmness of principle—individuality—strength of will! I scarcely know how best to designate the missing quality, whose absence only made itself felt now and then. Oh the beautiful shining sands! how lovely they are in the golden light of the morning! reflecting all the splendours of the changing sky so beautifully, that we are apt to forget how little colour they have in themselves, and how frail a foundation they would be for any temple we might build upon them.

Sometimes I fancied my sister's character had something of this quality—so apt to take its colour from others, so little adapted to hold to any course of opposition, even if opposition should become a virtue or a duty. The very sweetness of her nature, which made her more charming than any other woman I ever knew, seemed closely allied with this weakness. I fancy that the Mary who sat at her Saviour's feet may have been such a woman—a beautiful tender creature, eager to accept all holy teaching, peculiarly adapted to reflect the light shining on her from a diviner nature than her own.

If I sometimes felt some slight anxiety about my sister's future, the shadow passed as swiftly as a hurrying cloud in the grey March sky. She was to be Bernard's wife; and the very qualities wanting in her nature were those in which his was strongest. It mattered little that her weakness was to reflect the attributes of those she loved, since she was to be the wife of a man who, to my mind, seemed as nearly akin to perfection as mortality can be. I thought of this, and thanked God for the brightness of my darling's destiny! I fancy there can be no such thing as an enduring sorrow which is entirely selfish; for I know that the quiet days, and weeks, and months, which passed so gently by, seemed to carry my foolish grief away from me as safely and imperceptibly as a floating weed is borne upon the bosom of some lazy stream. Already my folly lay far behind me; already it seemed as if there had never been a time in which I had thought of my sister otherwise than as Bernard Champion's plighted wife.

Midsummer came, and Bernard left us for a brief holiday, which he was to spend with the family of a college friend—a young man who had been my cousin's chief companion at Oxford, and of whom he had talked to us a great deal, so much that we had formed a kind of familiar liking for a person whom we had never seen, but whose name had become a household word. The young man was the second son of a

baronet, whose estate was within ten miles of Sandycoast—a penniless younger son, who, with a versatility of talent that was perpetually winning him new friends and new opportunities, seemed lamentably deficient in all practical adaptability.

“Poor Lawrence!” said my cousin; “if he had only seven thousand a year, or if his friends would let him live upon thirty shillings a week in some country cottage on the banks of a trout-stream, I think he’d be one of the happiest fellows in the universe, and the most harmless. But when people call upon him to choose a profession; when they tell him that life is a battle-field, and that it is time for him to pin his colours in his hat, and begin his march upon the dusty highway that leads to the field where the strife is thickest, he shrugs his shoulders and promises to join the march to-morrow. He was one of the brightest men at Brasenose, but he wasted the time in which other men were reading for their examination in the composition of sentimental poetry for a London magazine. He began to study half a dozen Oriental languages while we were travelling together in the East; not because he had any tangible idea as to how they were ever likely to be of use to him, but because the whim of the moment drifted him that way. His brain must be a perfect treasury of odds and ends, the tangled and ravelled shreds of all manner of incongruous studies. He is one of the most indefatigable men I ever knew, and yet I have never known him to accomplish anything. If he had been the owner of the Koh-i-noor, he would have left the cutting of it unfinished. Should he ever build a house—and you may be sure if he does he’ll be his own architect—I am positive he’ll forget the staircase. Just now his friends have reduced him to extreme submission, and I am invited to Colethorpe in the hope that I may be able to persuade him into reading for the Church. They want him to read with me, and seem to fancy that in this quiet place he will do better than amongst the distraction of the university. But I doubt my dear erratic old friend when it comes to a question of perseverance in any course whatever; and yet, Heaven knows, a purer or a better man could scarcely be devoted to the good work. Do you remember what Bettina von Arnim’s brother said of that wild, unaccountable creature? ‘Her mind is like a bunch of flowers, among which there are some very rare and beautiful blossoms, but there is no ribbon to bind them together.’ Perhaps the influence of some good woman might do that which Lawrence Annesley’s friends have never been able to accomplish. If he could find such a wife as our dear, earnest, indefatigable Patty!”

He looked at me half smiling, half serious, and then turned to my sister with the love-light on his face that always shone there when he looked at her. I think he was so happy himself that he wanted to find some kind of happiness for every one else. Ah, I

fancy I hear his firm, soldier-like footstep on the narrow pavement as I stand at the single casement which looks out upon the street. I fancy I see him again as I saw him in the hopeful brightness of his youth, when life lay before him like a vision of paradise, glorified by the radiance of a pure and happy love.

He went away from us for his brief holiday at Colethorpe, and the house seemed to slip back into the stillness of the past. Bernard took the spirit of life and progress away with him, and a lazy quiet fell upon us all in his absence. Oh, how we missed him ! how blank our quiet evenings seemed without the voice which had been wont to open all the world of history and science, art and poetry ; the genial intellect which had shed for us its own pleasant light upon subjects that are so terribly dull when handled by a duller man ! Busy though his life had been, and much as his duties had taken him away from us, we missed him in almost every hour of the day ; and even in that brief interval I saw how much my sister Sophy depended upon the man who hoped to be her husband. With him she was everything ; without him, the soft and gentle nature lapsed into its old childishness—a loving, clinging, innocent nature always, but too weak for perseverance, too soft for constancy. The studies which Sophy had pursued almost diligently, so long as Bernard was near to direct and approve, were all neglected now that he was gone. The German declensions were so difficult ; Schlegel, and Goethe, and Schiller were such dreadful creatures to cope with in their original tongue ; and when Sophy had carried a whole German library to our favourite nook in the garden, it would happen somehow or other that she had so much to say to me that must be said before she began her work ; and thus a long morning would melt away, and nothing was done with the Schiller and the Schlegel, and the grammars and dictionaries, there being no terror of Bernard's grave looks, mutely reproachful of her idleness.

“ He wants me to improve myself, you know, Patty ; but improving one's self is so dreadfully difficult, especially in summer. I don't know how it is, but in very warm weather Schlegel's sentences seem to buzz round and round in my head like so many great booming bees ; then I begin to wonder whether it wouldn't be better for Bernard to marry some really clever woman, instead of trying to improve me.”

It must not be supposed for a moment that my sister was a stupid woman. Harsh judges might have sometimes pronounced her silly ; but I fancy that the quality which people call silliness is very apt to go along with a highly imaginative and poetical nature. The poet who can write a *Deserted Village*, the gentle humorist who can create a *Primrose Family*, is the same man who takes childish pleasure in a peach-blossom coat, and whose silly speeches afford prim Boswell

ample food for laughter. The "inspired idiot," inhabiting a bright and wonderful universe of his own, is apt to be a little awkward and out of place when he descends to that lower sphere in which the common inhabitants are so delightfully at their ease. My admiring love is not so ambitious that I would draw any parallel between my sister and Oliver Goldsmith, but after experience demonstrated how rich a mine of poetry lay undeveloped in the mind which could not concentrate itself on any one subject long enough to master a difficult language.

My cousin had been away from us a little more than a fortnight when chance brought about a meeting between my sister and me, and some members of the family at Colethorpe. Sir John Annesley was by no means a rich man, and he had been residing on the Continent with his wife, his elder son, and his two grown-up daughters, for some years, during which the Sandycoast people said he had been nursing his income under the pretence of recruiting his health. He was not a popular man in our neighbourhood, and he had kept himself a good deal aloof from society during the few months that had elapsed since his return to Colethorpe. Thus it was that neither I nor Sophy had met any of the Annesley family until this summer morning in July, on which Sophy and I carried our books to Rixmount Castle, with the intention of spending a long, dreamy day under the shadow of the ruined Saxon wall. Rixmount was three miles from St. Augustine's Rectory, but we country damsels thought very little of a three-mile walk on a summer morning.

The ruins of Rixmount Castle crown a bare hill above the sea, and command the noblest view of that changeful ocean to be obtained anywhere in the neighbourhood of Sandycoast. Ah, how often, shut in by the black walls of some dingy London street, I have fancied myself on the green slopes where the sheep crop the stunted grass, and the summer air blows fresh and pure from the wide, grey sea! The ruined wall is a little too old to be interesting, for I cannot carry my sympathies back to the fair-haired Saxons who may have defended it in the days of the Heptarchy; but the spot and the atmosphere about it were always delicious to me, and the thought of them comes back to me like the memory of some calmer world.

We sat upon a fallen block of stone under the cloudless blue sky, Sophy reading a novel aloud, while I worked, when the sound of voices and footsteps arrested my darling's lecture, and looking up we saw my cousin Bernard with two ladies and a young man of his own age, whom we guessed at once to be Lawrence Annesley. Of course there was an introduction, and Sophy and I very quickly found ourselves quite at home with two rather high-nosed young ladies, whose easy manners, self-possessed without being self-assured, entirely dispelled our rustic shyness. These two young ladies were Lawrence Annesley's sisters, Clara and Fanny, both some years older than I. They were

tall, showy-looking women, and had been very much admired in Parisian society I heard afterwards; but the popular Gallic idea seems to be that an English *mees* must needs be an heiress, and the dowerless Miss Annesleys had won no better tribute than the elegantly unmeaning compliments of their foreign admirers.

Sophy's lovely face brightened with the excitement of this unexpected encounter, and we found ourselves presently grouped in a little circle among the fallen stones under the ivy-covered wall, talking as familiarly as if we had been old friends. Was it possible to be otherwise than familiar and friendly with Lawrence Annesley, the brightest and most genial creature who ever trifled with the solemn duties of life? I can find no words that will paint him as he really was. He was one of those men of whom it is so difficult to speak without "extenuating" something; yet about whom the basest slanderer would scarcely have the heart to "aught set down in malice." His life was a perpetual apology for its shortcomings. Never was a man more conscious of his deficiencies, more truly penitent for his faults. Ah, what a bright, versatile creature he was! and how strange it seems that he should have been of so little use in the world! I watched him as he lounged with his back against the wall talking to my sister—the two bright faces turned towards each other, and something that seemed to me a shadowy likeness between them. What was that faint resemblance between two faces so unlike in form and colour? What was it? and what significance was there in that vague likeness which caused a dull pain in my heart as I watched those two? and yet two happier faces never reflected the sunlight of a summer heaven. Lawrence Annesley's bright hazel eyes had a pleasant sunlight of their own; there were gleams of ruddy gold in his loose brown hair blown away from his forehead; and his frank boyish smile might have lighted the face of a lad fresh from Eton. I never saw a countenance so instinct with youthfulness as Lawrence Annesley's; my cousin and he were almost of the same age, but Bernard looked ten years older than his friend.

Our little party broke into two groups presently, and while Bernard talked to the elder Miss Annesley and me, Lawrence was talking and laughing gaily with Sophy and his sister. I could hear their conversation mixing with our own every now and then. They were talking of my cousin, and Lawrence sang his praises with a fond enthusiasm which inspired me with a very hearty liking for this frank, genial young man. Of himself he spoke in the apologetic tone which I found afterwards was natural to him.

"Yes, he is the best, dearest, truest, bravest, goodest—who is it that says goodest? Charles Lamb, isn't it? or one of those dear old creatures who used to write delightful dreamy lucubrations, that are such jolly reading for a long summer afternoon,—he is

the noblest fellow in creation, and I congratulate the happy lady who can boast of such a Bayard for her own liege knight. Why should there not be a Bayard of the church militant? Is there any fight harder than a good man's single-handed battle with the arch-enemy? Every day, every day the demon lies in wait, and the struggle must be renewed afresh, and the warm heart's blood must be spilt again, and the weary soldier creeps back to his tent wounded, but not vanquished. To-day Satan lies grovelling in the dust, and the Christian hero stands triumphant with his mailed foot upon the breast of the fiend; but to-morrow his foe confronts him again, erect and terrible. Ah, how many disguises he wears! in what unthought-of corners he hides himself! now playing bo-peep among the pages of a book, now looking out of beautiful earthly eyes, now shining in the glamour that hangs about a bishop's mitre, now crouching amongst sacks of gold. And the fight goes on all through the long, long day, and it is only when the darkness closes in, and the dying soldier sees his enemy crawling away maimed, and stricken, and humiliated, it is only then that he feels himself a conqueror. And my poor, dear, hopeful mother asks *me* to fight such a fight! Oh, Miss Champion, if you knew what a pitiful creature I feel myself when I associate with your cousin Bernard, and how I should envy and hate him if he didn't happen to be the dearest friend I have in the world!"

Fanny Annesley laughed heartily at her brother's concluding words. "Only imagine my brother hating any one, Miss Champion!" she exclaimed. "If you knew him as well as I do, you would know how unutterably preposterous such an idea seems to me. Clara and I call Lawrence the zoophyte. He is such a dear, good creature, of the morally invertebrate order; very clever, but with no backbone to hold his intellectual attainments together. He is very fond of drawing; but you should see his portfolio, full of heads without shoulders; beautiful faces, with one eye filled in and one cheek shaded; sketches from nature, with one tree worked out, and all the rest the feeblest indication of what he meant to do. He plays the piano delightfully, but he never masters the last page of a fantasia, and his musical repertoire is the merest rag-bag of odds and ends; and poor dear mamma is so anxious that he should enter the Church, and cannot bring herself to see that he is entirely unfitted for it. Our only strength lies in Mr. Champion's influence; if any one can mould Lawrence into something good and useful, he can—and if he fails, farewell to all our hopes."

I could not help listening to this conversation. I could not help stealing a glance now and then at those two bright faces whose indefinable likeness puzzled and perplexed me. In spite of my perplexity, however, I was considerably amused by the calm manner

in which Lawrence Annesley stood by and allowed his weaknesses to be expatiated upon by his sister, who took very much the tone which she might have taken if her three or four years of seniority had been half a century.

“Yes, I am the most useless fellow in the universe,” he said, as cheerfully as if he had been remarking the brilliancy of the summer day. I observed that he always spoke of himself contemptuously as a “useless fellow,” or a “preposterous creature,” or an “absurd and anomalous being;” and that he always chose the biggest and most alarming words in the English language to express what he meant. “I am an utterly incongruous and unnecessary wretch, and unless Bernard can do something with me I must come to no good.

He said this in his airiest manner. I stole a little look at Sophy while Bernard and Clara Annesley were deep in a discussion about the provincial character of our church architecture, and I saw that my sister was half amused and half bewildered by Lawrence’s wild way of talking. It was so unlike anything she had been accustomed to, and she scarcely knew whether to laugh or to look gravely reproachful.

We spent a very happy day upon that bare hill above the sea, with no better shelter from the July sun than the old Saxon wall. Mounted upon this stout old wall Lawrence Annesley delivered a serio-comic lecture upon the history of the ruined castle, and the manners and customs of its Saxon inhabitants. Ah, I fancy I see him, now, with his young face steeped in the summer sunshine, and the outline of his light, boyish figure sharply defined against the blue summer sky. I have only to close my eyes, and I can see him, and Bernard’s darker face looking up to him in wondering amusement. Two faces so wondrously unlike!—two faces which make up the history of my sister’s life. Ah, what a sad and tragical story it was which began in a happy, idle summer ramble among the ruins of an old Saxon fortress! Was there any battle ever fought upon that castle hill half so terrible as the strife and the passion, the anguish and the sin, which were to mingle darkly in the story of our lives?

AGNUS DEI.

SWEET Love of God, all other love exceeding,
 O come and purify the sin-stain'd soul !
 Hear Thou our prayer while painfully 'tis pleading ;
 Heal Thou our hearts—Thou canst—O make us whole !

The love of earth is dear, but Thou art dearer ;
 And sweet as summer is the joy of life ;
 And every cross we bear still brings us nearer
 The everlasting rest for sin and strife.

We feel our sin, and know its deep defiling,
 And mournfully we cry unto our God :
 Break Thou the spell too long our hearts beguiling ;
 Help us to tread the path which Jesus trod.

Help us to walk more closely to our Saviour ;
 O help us to receive the life He gives !
 Help us to seek to order our behaviour,
 And here on earth to live as Jesus lives.

Take Thou our wills, and mould them to Thy pleasure ;
 Take Thou our hearts, the strong desire to still.
 Give us, O Lord, Thy Spirit without measure ;
 Fill Thou our wills with Thy most holy will.

Give us Thy law, that we too may obey it,
 And hearing His kind words may we be blest,
 Who dearly bought Himself the right to say it,—
 “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.”

A. D.

ECCENTRICITY.

It has been said by a great authority that the tendency of this generation is towards a uniformity so slavish and so senseless, that eccentricity has become valuable in and for itself, simply as a protest ; and that it is, therefore, to be cultivated and respected wherever it is found. We doubt both the assertion and the inference.

Of course we may take it for granted that only harmless eccentricity is meant. But even so, the position seems to require a somewhat stricter limitation than it has received. There are a hundred perfectly harmless eccentricities—mere violations of ordinary conventional rule—which it would be extremely difficult to value, or to regard with respect. Indeed, the mere idea that this view of eccentricity *per se* could ever prevail fills us with alarm. Suppose my eldest son chose to wear a wreath of roses ; no one can say that such a habit would be, in itself, injurious ; yet I, as a father, could hardly be expected to value the protest which it involved. The flowers might be Foster's best ; the decoration might be graceful in itself, and becoming to its wearer, just as there are women who always look their best in men's hats. The sole objection to the thing would be its eccentricity. And can anybody say that this would not be a serious objection ? Would any bishop ordain him in it ? Would any clergyman marry him in it ? Would it not be an insuperable bar to his advancement in any profession, or to his success in any competitive examination ? Will it be answered that the fact that it is such a bar proves the existence of that very slavish monotony of custom into which it is so desirable to insinuate a wholesome thrill of occasional discord ? We think it rather tends to show, what we believe to be the fact, that eccentricity is *not* valuable for its own sake, but that, whenever a custom is violated, the first question which a wise man asks is, whether any good was obtained by the violation which could not have been obtained as quickly and as thoroughly without it.

We go a little farther. We think that the breach of general custom is always in itself an evil—perhaps slight, but still an evil ; and we think that the question to be asked is, whether the good attained is greater than the evil ; whether the occasion demanded the sacrifice ? Where this question is answered in the affirmative, let the imputation of eccentricity be fearlessly incurred. We honour the man who defies the world for the sake of something better than the world ; but we are very far from honouring him if the thing which

he presents to us as better than the world is, not to put too fine a point upon it, simply and solely himself.

There are several other ways of looking at the matter. The rule which it is proposed to break is either good, bad, or indifferent. If it is good or bad, the question of its observance is a question of right or wrong, and does not belong to our subject. It is the breach of a rule in things indifferent which constitutes eccentricity; and we say that it is not worth while to bestow so much consideration upon an unimportant rule as to take the trouble of purposely breaking it. Nobody breaks a rule purposely without secretly commending himself for so doing; and the habit of secretly commending yourself because of certain unimportant differences from your neighbour is a bad habit. It comes from, and it tends to, littleness of mind.

It may be said that it is not worth while to bestow so much consideration upon an unimportant rule as to take the trouble of purposely keeping it. Eccentricities which arise in this way, which are simply neglects or oversights, can hardly be said to have any claim on our respect. We make allowances for them. If the object aimed at be worthy of pursuit, we forgive the man who disregards trifles in pursuing it; but we do not think him a greater man by reason of the number of small considerations which escape him. We say that if his mind was not capable of attending to things both great and small, he was wise to take the great and leave the small; but we should have respected him more if he had been capable of attending to both. And if the oversight or neglect was not the accident of a mind engrossed by high thoughts, it must be looked upon as a weakness. If my strong-minded daughter tucks up her petticoats to an unusual height, and goes into the water to save a child's life, I commend her, even though she may forget to let down her petticoats when she comes out of the water. But if she habitually tucks up her petticoats to an unusual height when she is walking on the pavement, I object to her. Till she has been remonstrated with, the eccentricity is, perhaps, simply an inadvertence, and in that case I take leave to consider it a foible. After she has been remonstrated with, if she persists, and defends herself by saying that she prefers convenience to custom, it becomes one of those intentional eccentricities which we are called upon to admire in and for itself. I resolutely decline admiring it, especially if she has thick ankles. If she has *not*, I may perhaps admire, but I shall be admiring her ankles, and not her eccentricity.

Two things are to be noticed as characteristics of eccentricity. It generally is a little ludicrous, and it generally diminishes influence. The latter characteristic is probably the result of the former. You may love the man whom you laugh at, but if he provokes laughter at the very moment in which he intends to move you

to tears, he must needs fail in his purpose. There are cases of abandoned loyalty, it is true, in which the most trifling, nay, the most ridiculous peculiarities become objects of enthusiasm. If your idol speaks through his nose, you will be tempted to revere all nasal utterances for his sake. But it is nonsense to say that you revere him because he speaks through his nose. The personality of the man includes and dignifies his defects. His very tricks are venerable. But the greatest leader will always be the man whose eccentricity is to be found in his acts, and not in his habits. Garibaldi's liberation of the Two Sicilies was a highly eccentric act; his subsequent withdrawal to Caprera, enriched only by honour, was more eccentric still. But the grandeur here lay in the daring devotedness and unselfishness, which were exhibited on a scale so vast that they seemed to be almost superhuman. If these eccentricities became the fashion, should we be called upon to respect a protest against them? Is not our admiration for the man who did these things increased when we find that he actually suffers from his own incapacity for breaking small rules of politeness, and getting rid of importunate visitors by a little pardonable bluntness?

There seems to be confusion of thought on this subject. Standards of action are doubtless generally lower than they ought to be, but it does not follow that whenever you depart from them you rise above them. There is falling short, and there is simple aberration. And we think that there is another point to be considered. There is such a weakness in the world as over-estimate of self. It does sometimes happen (of course not to *you*, my reader, but to most of your particular friends, as I dare say you will allow) that a man is tempted to think a little too highly of himself. Of course this temptation be-sets him most easily when he is in the act of preferring his own opinion to the opinion of the world at large. Therefore we think it well that he should try to be a little cautious and modest about his own opinions; and, considering it to be impossible for him accurately to weigh all subjects, that he should make his selection, and having made it, should defer to the collective opinion of his generation on the points which he does not select for his own special study. And if the points which he *does* select for private trial and legislation are small and indifferent points, such as questions about dress, manners, times, or seasons, we shall be apt to conclude that he has rather a small and indifferent sort of mind. And if, while busy with larger matters, it should be his habit and his pleasure to differ from his generation upon the smaller, we shall be apt to conclude that he thinks himself wiser than his generation. And if he differs merely by oversight, we shall forgive him if we have good reason to love and respect him on higher grounds; but we shall not forgive him if he expects us to approve the oversight, because in that case we shall

not believe it to be an oversight at all, but an intentional act, and we shall therefore judge it for its intrinsic merits or demerits.

If all this be true of men, much more is it true of women. We are not among those who hold the inherent equality of the sexes in matters intellectual. But not the less do we believe that women have powers to be cultivated and gifts to be used, and that these powers and gifts, when fairly dealt by, may sometimes develop a peculiar charm and merit of their own, out of their very difference from the powers and the gifts of men. But it is one of a woman's difficulties that her gift is often too big for her ; she cannot handle it without help, or she falls into grotesque attitudes as she carries it. It is not helping her to bid her lay down her burthen ; she wants to have it properly adjusted, so that she may walk steadily under it. We seriously think that every woman who is born with a gift, a taste, or a capacity above the average, should be trained to look upon eccentricity as, in some shape or other, her besetting danger. We think that she should make a study of conformity. In almost any company, if we were called upon to pick out the gifted woman, the woman who "does something," we should expect to detect her by some undesirable peculiarity. She is the woman whose hair is badly dressed, whose costume is in some way or other conspicuously unlike the prevailing fashion, who turns her back upon you when she wants to look at a book, who stares at you in blank defiance when you ask her a civil question, who snubs you or who patronizes you, who is downright rude or offensively deferential, or prodigal of caresses which mean nothing, or elaborate and complacent in her display of politeness. There is no medium for her ; either she will wear a pearl brooch on her forehead, and a *décolleté* dress by daylight, or she will disdain crinoline and corsets, and look like a great boy in disguise. The result of all this shows the mischief of it. Half the people who see her, whether they be men or women, come to the conclusion that it is best for a woman to be commonplace. She ought to be ashamed of helping to bring about this conclusion, because she thereby helps to lower instead of to raise the tone of thought about women ; and in reality she *is* higher in her aims, in her hopes, in her habits, than the generality of those with whom she associates ; only it has, unhappily, never occurred to her that it is her special duty to bring no discredit upon her aspirations. Surely you would not ask her to lay such aspirations aside ; surely you would not speak of them as her misfortune, if not her fault. It is much simpler to ask her to get rid of the foibles which accompany them.

For eccentricity is a foible when it is not a fault, and this is what we wish to establish. Want of taste—want of observation—want of humility—want of sympathy,—in one of these four regions its root will be found, and the resultant blossom can hardly be one which

you should wish to wear in your button-hole. Of the eccentricities which come from want of sympathy we have scarcely spoken except by implication. They are sins rather than faults. If the multitude of minute pangs which an untender nature inflicts on its way through life could be added together, they would appal the conscience. The acquisition of tact through sympathy should always be a part of Christian education, and if a glaring deficiency in this respect were looked upon in its true light *as a symptom*, the cause of which we were bound diligently to explore, we should often be surprised at the diagnosis of moral disease which would result from the examination. The discovery might not be pleasant, but it is a necessary step towards the cure.



MR. GLADSTONE AS AN HYMNOLOGIST.

WHAT a chapter might be written on the private occupations of public men! Some of them have been trivial enough: monarchs have ere now devoted their leisure to mending locks—even to taming flies! It is one advantage of the classical education given to English gentlemen that they can find in it endless amusement, intellectual, yet not fatiguing. To turn an ode of Horace into tolerable English verse; to write an inscription or an epitaph in tolerable Latin, are harmless and not unpleasant employments for men who have had their share of the toils of life. There are those whose fervid spirit carries them much farther. The Earl of Derby has just completed a translation of the “Iliad;” Mr. Gladstone is said to be similarly occupied, and has already furnished us with an example of what he can do in a rendering of the first book. For, like Richelieu, and with perhaps higher qualifications, the illustrious statesman claims to be also a poet.

Sacred poetry gave to the Latin language new forms, greater flexibility. Some of the Latin hymns of the mediæval church have wonderful beauty and power. It may not, perhaps, be out of place in this connection to attempt a rendering of one of the most beautiful,—

*Cœlestis O Jerusalem,
Mansura semper Civitas!*

“Jerusalem! the city
Abiding evermore,
How happy who hereafter
Shall crowd thy golden shore!
Peace ever waves her silent wing
Thy mighty mansions o’er;
The angels of the Eternal King
Kneel on thy glimmering floor.

“The glory of the Godhead
Doth make thy dwellings light;
The Lamb who bore our sorrows
Fills every heart with light.
Daily unto Jerusalem
Comes rest from all affright,
For those who wear Christ’s diadem
And saintly garments white.

“A voice of love calls ever
Up to those mansions fair;
Eternal weight of glory
Shall quell our sorrows there.

O therefore let our every breath
 With anthems fill the air
 To Him who suffer'd shameful death
 To save us from despair."

Mr. Gladstone, in a volume of translations lately published in conjunction with Lord Lyttelton, has most felicitously and completely caught the spirit of those Latin hymns. Before giving an example of this, let us quote a single stanza of his translation of Bishop Heber's verses to his wife,—

"But when at morn and eve the stars
 Behold me on my knee,
 I feel, though thou art distant far,
 Thy prayers ascend for me.

"Rite mî flexis genibus precanti,
 Supplices et Te sociare palmas
 Stella nascentis videt ac diei
 Stella cadentis."

The sweet singer whom he has thus rendered would, we think, acknowledge that his own thought is improved by the form into which it is thrown. But we pass on to Augustus Toplady's beautiful hymn,—

"Rock of Ages, rent for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee,"

Mr. Gladstone's rendering of which, besides its intrinsic value, is of extreme interest as showing that the modern English hymn is in essence the same as the old Latin hymn—that the same spirit actuated the unknown or forgotten hymn-writers of the church, which in later times inspired Toplady, Charles Wesley, Newton of Olney, Cowper, Heber. For if we had found Mr. Gladstone's translation of "Rock of Ages" in some ancient hymnal, we should not have imagined it the product of to-day. Thus it runs:—

"Jesus, pro me perforatus,
 Condar intra Tuum latus.
 Tu per lympham profluentem,
 Tu per sanguinem tepentem,
 Inpeccati mî redunda,
 Tolle culpam, sordes munda.

"Coram Te, nec justus forem
 Quamvis totâ vi laborem,
 Nec si fide nunquam cesso,
 Fletu stillans indefesso:
 Tibi soli tantum munus;
 Salva me, Salvator unus!

"Nil in manu mecum fero,
 Sed me versus Crucem gero;
 Vestimenta nudus oro,
 Opem debilis imploro;

Fontem Christi quæro immundus
Nisi laves, moribundus.

“Dum hos artus vita regit;
Quando nox sepulchro tegit;
Mortuos cum stare jubes,
Sedens Judex inter nubes;
Jesus, pro me perforatus,
Condar intra Tuum latus.”

Perhaps the least successful lines in this fine translation are those which begin and end the hymn, for Toplady's sublime couplet is in truth untranslatable. But in other respects the rendering is admirable; observe, for example, the noble line which ends the second verse,—

“Salva me, Salvator unus!”

If the Chancellor of the Exchequer's scanty leisure yields further fruit of this kind, there are countless readers who will rejoice to welcome it.



OUTDOOR CLERICAL AMUSEMENTS.

It seems now universally recognized that all human beings must have their seasons and means of recreation. The old and utterly idiotic ideas, that a man does not need recreation quite as much as he needs food and drink, are exploded. *Neque semper arcum tendit Apollo*. The bow must not always be bent, or it will soon lose its elastic spring. The wretched hack must not always be in harness, or it will soon only be fit for the knacker's yard. And the human brain and hand must not always be at work, or you will soon have a miserable and hopeless paralysis of both. There is equal force and philosophy in the familiar proverb about "all work and no play;" and the clergy, like other human beings, must have their recreations. They must have their recreations not only in the form of certain holidays, when they have their parish behind them, and go away elsewhere for a time altogether from their professional work and worry, but they must have them every week and every day. A certain portion of every day should be devoted exclusively to innocent enjoyment. Nor let any one imagine, when his minister acts thus, that he is idling his time or neglecting his duty. He is discharging his duty—his duty both to himself and his people, according to God's law and appointment. The laws of health are well understood and defined; and these laws are no more to be defied by a clergyman than by any one else. It is sheer suicide to be always at the oar; and it is cruel murder on the part of the pragmatistical blockhead (and there are such) who demands it at his hands. Let a man have certain hours and days of recreation, and he will do more work, and better work, when he is at it than if he never relaxed for a moment. And then he will retain his health and vigour, if spared, far into old age. Who does not know the talk in some quarters about the clergy, and how, regardless of all considerations—in defiance of all the known laws of health, they should "spend and be spent" in their Master's service? Work them as some ministers have been worked, and they will soon enough be spent. It is notorious how many quite young and robust men in all churches,—men who can ill be spared,—men who might have been an ornament and blessing to their age,—are at this moment "laid upon the shelf," their nerves shattered, their health gone, prematurely aged and dying, all because of the stupid and wicked demands made on their overtasked strength and time.

Men of England, don't grudge your clergymen the necessary leisure for recreation and amusement. They need it, as all do, to repair the tissues of the brain, to invigorate the muscles and members of the body, to purify the blood, to raise and quicken the animal spirits, on which so much depends, to the healthful, cheerful working point and pitch. It is really sickening to hear the demands often made upon a class already monstrously overworked, and, let it be added, in the majority of cases, scandalously under-paid. People are a long time arriving at common sense. It is something to be thankful for, that the dawn is now appearing, and the night of ignorance and stupidity passing away.

But even in quarters where it is professedly admitted that recreation and amusement are indispensable to all, and that the clergy are no exceptions to the rule, being men "of like passions" with all the rest of the race, there seems some doubt as to the *kind*, in respect of such, lawful for them to indulge. A not uncommon idea is that they are debarred by the restraints of their profession from participating in pastimes open to the laity; that many things lawful to these last must be eschewed by them. To some extent the idea is right, and based on the inherent and essential fitness of things; but to a much larger extent it is wrong, and fit only to be ranked with those "old wives' fables" that are altogether unworthy of the enlightened views and robust and manly sense of this nineteenth century. I confess, indeed, that it jars with my notion of the propriety of things to see a clergyman whirling round a ball-room in the dance, with some idle girl in his arms—his face greasy and shining, his hair dishevelled, his coat-tails standing out with the centrifugal action of the roundabout spin, his collar limp and hanging down with moisture, his whole appearance a satire on the dignity of the cloth. Brothers mine, leave that sort of thing to the scented and vacuous dandies,—the becoated, the becollared tailor's blocks who frequent such scenes, and whose loftiest ambition is to ogle the girls and obtain the reputation of a lady-killer. It is beneath the position of a clergyman to disport himself after that fashion. A quiet quadrille, on a chance occasion, among intimate friends, may pass without remark; but rapid and rotund dancing! faugh! let it not be thought of for a moment! The people who see you careering in a galop, or jogging in a schottische, on Friday or Saturday evening, will not be very much impressed, depend on it, with your preaching on Sunday morning. A clergyman must never forget that he is a clergyman, and that a certain gravity of deportment, with which such amusements are inconsistent, should never be wholly laid aside.

On the other hand, there is a limit to such restraints; and, as a rule, what is right in a layman ought to be equally right in a

clergyman. A thing is either right or wrong. If it is right, it is right for all ; if wrong, it is wrong for all. I am not aware that in Scripture any distinction is made in obligations, or that one class of men is required to be more strict and self-denying than another. The clergy undoubtedly are to be "ensamples to the flock," but no more than ensamples. The essential idea of an ensample involves community of practice. What is required of a clergyman is that in all things, to the best of the grace granted him, he shall exhibit a pattern of Christian living ; but then this is equally required of the layman who professes to be a disciple of his Lord. It is to be borne, moreover, in mind how frequently a clergyman's presence at, and participation in, this or the other amusement will regulate its propriety ; preventing indecorum or excess ; checking conduct on the part of persons who, in his absence, might be tempted to say or do what, in his presence, they would not ; and generally promoting the use and preventing the abuse of "a good creature of God."

The object of this paper is to point out some of the *outdoor* amusements which a clergyman can recommend, and in which he can safely indulge. I suppose it is unnecessary to show how desirable, and indeed indispensable, it is, for persons following sedentary occupations of all others, persons kept much in the house, poring over books, or writing at a desk, to get out into the open air, to inhale the invigorating ozone, to exercise the limbs, and promote the circulation of the blood. To be permitted to do this, every medical man will tell you, is life ; to be shut off from it, death. The process of destruction to the vital principle is less speedy, but not less sure, than to be put under water, or deprived of food and drink. Now what kind of outdoor amusements are open to the clergy ? What are suitable ? Before proceeding to specify any, is it possible to lay down rules that will help towards a safe and judicious selection ?

Always bearing in mind the fitness of things, the outdoor amusements of the clergy should be, first of all, *decorous*. I do not refer, of course, to outdoor amusements that would not be decorous in any one, to say nothing of a clergyman, and from which, therefore, he is excluded. There are pleasures which it is a shame for any one to indulge in. Even the layman who takes delight in cock-fighting, or "ratting," or pugilistic "mills," is a person equally brutal and contemptible, and from whom all men with any pretensions to decency should hold aloof. But apart from such as these, inadmissible in any one, and therefore inadmissible in a clergyman, there are others of a less questionable kind, which it would be also well for him to avoid. I have spoken of dancing as an indoor amusement which a clergyman would do well to avoid ; there are outdoor amusements of the same stamp. Hunting, for example, is one of these. I am not sure that hunting, however delightful, is permissible either to layman or clergyman.

It is abominably cruel. There can be no doubt about that, whatever hunting men may say to the contrary. You will hear them gravely assert that foxes are vermin, and should be destroyed. Very good. Destroy them in the most rapid and painless way—shoot them. But it is notorious that it is not to get rid of foxes—to make away with a nuisance, that men hunt. The breed of foxes is carefully preserved for the purpose of hunting ; and then, unlike a deer or hare, when run to earth it is worth nothing. The others are food for man : this is useless—mere carrion, to be devoured by the dogs. “ Well, but it is such a sly, cunning brute,” it is often replied. “ You can’t like a fox ; a brute of such a nature and disposition.” Can it help its nature ? Was it not made by the Great Creator as it is ? And is that a reason for setting a great pack of excited and ferocious hounds on it, and torturing it for hours, as often happens, before it is killed ? No doubt a fine burst across country on a swift and steady weight-carrier, on a bright November morning, in company with a field of eighty or a hundred horsemen, well mounted, and sitting their fliers like men, is a splendid thing. But the cruelty of the sport is to me insuperable. It is scandalously cruel to the fox ; and it is often not much better to the poor horses. Many are killed ; most return from “ a run ” sick and exhausted, refusing to feed for days, and sometimes strained and injured for life. The expense of the thing, too, may well be considered a barrier to most—certainly to most clergymen. The cost of a good hunter is great ; the “ keep ” is considerable ; and you must have at least a couple to do even a day or two in the week. Worst of all, the company at “ a meet ” is not the choicest. A clergyman would be brought into contact with a good many “ rough customers,” whose language could not but shock his sense of propriety, whom he could not well rebuke in the circumstances, and who would pay no respect to him if he did. Hunting, therefore, is not a decorous amusement for a clergyman. No amusement is in which he cannot choose his own company, and be sure that neither his class nor his religion will suffer in its pursuit. The first thing a clergyman has to look to is, then, whether an amusement be for him decorous.

Next, it should be such as will fully occupy and engage his mind for the time : it should be distracting. No amusement is good that does not distract the thoughts from all other things, and fix and detain them on itself ; for the very end of amusement to a person in the position of a clergyman is to obtain relief from mental labour and worry. But relief from mental labour and worry is only to be had by engaging the attention of the mind on something else. Worn out with mental exertion, a thoughtless friend will bid you do nothing—be idle till you obtain relief ; forgetting that your mind can’t be idle, can’t do nothing. It must have occupation : and relief is obtained, not by *no* occupation, but by *change* of occupation, by substituting one class of

interests for another. Now take the case of a clergyman who has been busy in his study all the morning, working his way through some difficult theological point, or preparing his sermon for Sunday. He lays it aside to take his needful afternoon's recreation. What shall it be? A *walk* is the most common thing fixed on. But if it be alone, or for no specific object, as to botanize or geologize, what relief from labour is furnished to the mind? Absolutely none. The workman has changed his workshop, the student his study, that is all. Out in the field or on the roadside, as he saunters and muses, he is still brooding on the work just left; he can't help it; his mind, undistracted by some other special interest forcing the attention on itself, wanders inevitably back to the knotty theological point, or the further excogitation of the sermon, and at the end of an hour and a half he returns from his walk unrefreshed, possibly more weary and jaded than when he set out. It may be said, indeed, that to the man of taste and discernment nature should present enough features of beauty and interest to engage the eye and thoughts of the pedestrian. The changeful sky, the shifting landscape of clouds, the trees, the hedgerows, the wild flowers, the streams and rivers, or, if near the shore, the sight and music of the sea, should be amply sufficient for the purpose in view. But then they are not: experience proves that. Many clergymen live in towns, where such things are names and nothing more: then many more don't care for them. All clergymen are not poets and sentimentalists; and those who are, are not always in the vein and mood for the appreciation of nature. If you are worried with your work, or very much absorbed with some subject, nature, unless presenting some striking and unusual appearance, will avail little towards affording relief. A very splendid sunset, a thunderstorm, the rapid growth of buds and flowers in spring, decking woodland and field in startling glory; or the rapid fall of leaves in autumn, leaving clothed boughs and branches suddenly bare; snow in winter, and the like, may occasionally lend interest to the "constitutional," and divert the mind from self. But the best of all is a storm of wind. Go out and battle with the blast, and, struggling against it with might and main, you will be forced to attend to outward things, and so be withdrawn from work and worry. But then, glorious sunsets, storms, thunder, sudden, startling changes in the landscape, in spring growth or autumn ruin, are the exception, not the rule. Nature from day to day looks very much the same, and the familiar road is trodden without a thought of what the surrounding scene is like. Study goes on in the open air as in the house, and the mind is as busy as ever, as haunted and harassed by care. No; the constitutional walk won't do. It is not mind-compelling; it makes no sufficient demand on the attention; the limbs move; the direction is taken and followed without an effort, and

effort is absolutely essential to the ideal recreation in which a man of studious and sedentary occupation should engage. The circumstances in which such a man is placed when his work is done, and he means to amuse himself, should render it impossible, or all but impossible, for him to think of it at all. His recreations, therefore, should be of a sort to shut it out from his mind; they should be a distraction; so shall he obtain the coveted and needful relaxation which previous exertion has won, and return afresh to his work with renewed energy and power.

Another most important requisite in the recreations of the clergy, and all persons engaged in sedentary occupations, is that they should call into vigorous exercise all the limbs and muscles of the body: they should be health-giving. The object of outdoor recreation, besides the mere pastime, ought to be the preservation of health, or the recovery of health, together with a further and fuller development of the whole animal and muscular system. The importance of this cannot be overestimated when it is remembered how largely the views and sentiments of human beings are coloured and affected by the state of their health. Apart from the fact that a man's happiness depends very much on the regular action of the gastric juices, the circulation of the blood, the flow of the bile, and the like,—for let a man's outward surroundings be what they may, sick, headachy, infirm, he is wretched,—the views he entertains of life, religion, spiritual manifestations (I don't mean the preposterous Yankee sort), are sure to be jaundiced, exaggerated, and false. The stomach and the brain, the body and the mind, are closely associated. They act and react on each other in a painful degree, and sound and healthy views are no more to be expected where there is a sick or debilitated system, than “grapes from thorns,” or “figs from thistles.” Hence the pernicious effect on his preaching, and so on his congregation, when a clergyman is not in the enjoyment of good health. He takes a lugubrious and miserable view of life; he imposes a severe and unjustifiable “mortification” as alone entitling to the name of Christian; and keeping in shade the bright side of the believer's experiences and hopes, he dwells with persistent exclusiveness on the dark, the fears and forebodings, the pains and sufferings to be endured. All this is bad; it gives men wrong impressions of our blessed religion, and scares many away from embracing the truth. “If there must be an end to all pleasure and happiness when we turn Christians, we had rather not be Christians at all,” is their feeling. Now get the liver right, the brain clear, the depression of spirits that comes of bad health, the moral mephitic vapours that cloud and distort the view, dissipated, and your parish priest will preach sounder sermons, and set forth healthier views of things. And much of this is to be got by being some hours every day in the open air, interested in some occupation

that makes a demand on bodily effort and exertion. It is by bodily exercise that we strengthen the limbs, open the chest, harden the muscles, regulate the ganglionic apparatus, make the body a fit companion for the mind. If it is a sin to let the mind go to seed, and become enfeebled through want of exercise, our bodies were given by the same beneficent Father to be tended and developed in all their powers no less. Why should the student and clergyman be a bent, in-chested, weak-legged, flabby-muscled dyspeptic, as he too often is? Some of the cleverest and most studious men I know, are men like Professor Wilson, who could lift a ton, or do their forty miles, fair "heel and toe," in a day. Let clergymen have done with tea-sipping, toasting toes over a slow fire, the ensnaring pipe, the dawdling hands-in-the-pocket lounge in which so many indulge, and go out daily into the fresh air, fair or foul, for three hours' tough work to limb and arm. Then will the stooping back grow straight, the hollow chest expand, the wan cheek catch the glow of health, the whole man be what a man ought—as vigorous in body as in mind.

Decorous, distracting, and health-giving,—such being some of the characteristics that should be combined in clerical outdoor amusements, where are they to be found? Let me instance a few, in my humble judgment, satisfying all the conditions.

There is *riding*, if it can be afforded. Some clergymen, to their people's disgrace, are so poorly paid that they cannot afford to keep a horse. When they can, let them ride. There is no better exercise. It calls into play all the muscles of the body, and shakes the whole system into health and life. And let the animal bestrode be, if the rider can sit him at all, rather a gay and fiery steed than a perfectly mild and tractable one. We want the mind engaged, the attention absorbed. If riding is made too easy, if the rider is mounted on a quiet, steady, jog-trot old nag that goes right on, unmoved by sights or sounds, he has the *exercise* of riding, but not its *distraction*. As in the "constitutional" walk previously alluded to, no demand being made on the attention to manage the animal, the mind goes back to its old work and worry, and receives consequently no relief. But mount a gay, fiery young thoroughbred, all life and quicksilver, whom a touch of the switch would set off like a locomotive, or a check of the curb set up like a bear on his hind legs,—that needs riding, *i. e.*, constant wakeful attention, if you would not be landed in the ditch or left sprawling on the roadside,—and you will have your mind thoroughly distracted, I guarantee, from your work and worry. Then there is the strange rising and exhilaration of spirits that comes from the bounding life beneath you, and the rapid "breather" over the turf, that you are sure in a mile or two to fall in with, even on the public turnpike. With what a flush of health, a

bounding of the pulse, a feeling of recovered youth and strength, and last, but not least, an appetite for dinner, you return from your two hours' "airing" on the back of a game "six-year-old," gay, but without the suspicion of a vice! You have been splendidly shaken up, and shaken out of yourself. You have taken more oxygen into your lungs and blood than you would breathe in your close study in a year; and you are screwed up for future work, and better, and easier. The theological difficulty will melt away before your quickened mind, and the "numbers will come" with a rush and flow when you "tackle" to your Sunday's sermon, as you never felt before. In short, your system has got what it wanted, a fillip and general stirring up, and you are a better and healthier man.

It is barely possible some old lady may object to the sort of recreation just suggested. "I see you ride and drive about a good deal," said a well-meaning but singularly weak old woman to a clerical friend of mine. "Why do you do it? It will injure your usefulness. The Apostles were not in the habit of doing so; neither was our Saviour; and I think it is unbecoming in a clergyman." "Indeed," said my friend, "I didn't know there was any harm in it; half the clergymen in England both ride and drive." "Ah," said the old woman, "but not as you do, on a fine thoroughbred horse, and with a servant in livery sitting beside you." "Oh, then it is to the style of the thing you object," responded my friend. "Yes," she said. "When the Saviour rode, it was on an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass. There was no ministering to *His* carnal pride or vanity there." Be it observed, the old woman drove out herself daily in a handsome carriage and pair of horses, and with a couple of men attending her; but she thought that when her clergyman rode or drove, it should be in such fashion as that the exercise should be a source of mental mortification as well as bodily exertion. An old screw, spavined and broken-winded, should have been the style of animal he bestrode, and a rickety old rattle-trap, just falling to pieces, time-worn and moth-eaten, the conveyance in which he appeared. Poor old lady! Let us hope she stands alone, or represents at most but a small minority of either her own sex or the other.

Rowing, if you are near water, is good. The exercise is just of the sort suited to men of sedentary occupations. The muscles of the arms and chest are exerted, and so strengthened and developed. Even the most studious man, the man most tied to his desk and books, has some walking exercise that keeps his limbs in a passable sort of condition; but the upper portions of the body are left without anything to do the same for them. Hence, how many clergymen are narrow in the shoulders, weak in the arms, short in the wind when forced to exert themselves, feeble in the back, well enough below the waist, but scarecrows above! For such, rowing is just the recreation

required. It will broaden the shoulders, develop the limbs, strengthen the arms, improve the wind, make the weak back as strong as iron. And then, besides the health-giving exercise, there is the admirable distraction which rowing insures: in guiding the boat, pulling and feathering the oars in time and with grace, putting on the occasional "spurt," listening to the purl and ripple of the water as the little naiad cleaves her way through, or fighting against wind and wave, if on the sea, when it is fresh and blowing. Every stroke is fraught with life; every moment with joy. Out there, in the sun and on the water, gliding on river or tossing on sea, books and bother are forgotten. We grow boys again for the nonce; and when we land and become men once more, we shall be none the worse for our temporary renewal of the old days before the hair grew grey, or the scalp got bald.

To those who care for the sport, *fishing* is a good recreation. There are, however, some drawbacks. You are very apt to catch cold, wading knee-deep, as you are often obliged to do, in the water, even though well protected by india-rubber boots. Then, when the fish won't take, it is dull and wearisome, and worse than useless as a distraction. For myself it lacks excitement and interest. Doubtless, when you get a big fellow of four or five pounds weight, or a fine salmon of twenty or thirty pounds weight, on to the end of your line, there is excitement and interest enough; but that happens about once or twice in a lifetime. Some men, however, are enthusiastic about fishing, and could stand over a bucket of water all day casting their lines and twittering their flies. *Chacun à son goût*. If a man delights in the piscatorial art, and finds it a distraction from work and care, by all means let him fish. It is a pursuit for which there is apostolic example, and higher than apostolic authority.

Shooting is admirable, *totus, ter es, atque rotundus*. Here mind and body are both engaged, and engaged so as to make it impossible for other things to intervene and harass. Whether it be out over the purple heather, after the dun grouse, or in merry greenwood, after the nameless varieties of game that abound in the covers, it is all that could be desired for health and distraction. There is fine gentle exercise, and constant excitement. The excitement, indeed, is intense. At every step you may put up your quarry, and you never know when or what—hare, rabbit, roe-deer, pheasant, pigeon, woodcock, partridge, snipe,—I have seen them all rise almost simultaneously from their hiding-places, like Roderick Dhu's men from their heather-covered retreat. Then there is the skill to single out your bird or beast, and bring him down. You are breathing invigorating air; led into strangely beautiful scenes on hill or in woodland; have your limbs and lungs tried by the walk; your mind and soul absorbed by a mighty and indescribable combination of interests. There is something intensely cheery and stirring in the crack of

the guns, the cries of the beaters, the working of the dogs, the sudden rustle amid the long grass or ferns of the startled game, bounding away before you like the wind, or the booming whirr of the heavier birds or twitter of the smaller, as they rise from their lair and spread their wings for a flight. But it is a cruel amusement, say some. Why? More so than fishing? Not by a half so cruel. You lift your fowling-piece, and your bird drops dead without a moment's pain; and even if only wounded it is got in a minute by a beater or a dog, and all suffering is over; but in fishing, the representative and model clerical amusement, the very sport of the thing lies in this, that you shall not land your trout or salmon too soon, but that it shall show "play," *i. e.*, be tortured with a cutting, horrid hook in its mouth for half an hour, a whole hour, two, three, four. Of course "two blacks don't make a white;" but I never heard fishing objected to as unclerical, even by the most strait-laced; and if not fishing, why shooting? The wild animals the sportsman pursues are given by the beneficent Father for food to man, no less than the ox or the sheep, and there is infinitely less of pain inflicted in securing them than in doing to death either of these last. My clerical brother, don't be afraid to shoulder your breech-loader in the season, and betake yourself to Highland moor or Lowland cover. As an amusement you will find such recreation all you desire. It is a perfect and complete distraction from work and worry, and it will insure you such a stock of health and strength that your professional labours will sit lightly on your shoulders, and sickness be known only as a name.

Cricket is another pastime admirably adapted to the wants of the student, calling, as it does, all the muscles of the body into exercise, and furnishing, in its demands on the attention, a thorough and complete distraction from care. Its only fault lies in this, that the exercise is just a degree too violent, and requires a special training to stand it properly. A certain bishop, I understand, disapproves, if he does not entirely prohibit his clergy from this amusement. On what ground, it would be difficult to say. Well, my brother cleric, if you happen to be in the diocese of a weak old woman, you must recognize constituted authority, even when so represented, and abstain from what your own conscience would permit you to indulge. A bishop is a bishop, whatever else he may be, and a certain respect is due to the office, though not to the man.

Golf is another game open to the clergy, and admirably adapted both for exercise and distraction. I am not sure that it is much known south of the Tweed. It might with advantage. It is played out on an open heath, with small balls, hit by a variety of instruments or bats prepared for the purpose. The object of the game is to put your ball into a given number of holes arranged in the ground, with the fewest possible strokes. Immense skill is shown in

doing this—in giving the right strength to a hit, and selecting the right weapon for delivering it on different sorts of ground. The exercise is splendid. Arms and limbs are both engaged. It is calculated you walk at an average of four miles an hour, and as you have an object in view, the interest is constant and enchainning, and furnishes a glorious distraction from work and worry. Indeed, so fascinating is this game, that many regard all other amusements as poor and tame in comparison. One hunting man of great celebrity I know of, has sold off his stud, and, wet or dry, is almost always to be seen challenging a brother of the bat to a friendly encounter upon certain “links” near a famous old university town, and declaring that golf is the only amusement worthy an intelligent and athletic man.

In summer there is *bowling* and *croquet*. Here the exercise is gentle, as becoming the season, and may be of the most dignified, as becoming the “cloth.” Of the two, I think *croquet* the best. There is not so much standing in one place, and not so much stooping. When played, too, by good players who understand the game—which the majority of players do not,—it allows of a far greater variety of play, and a far higher standard of skill. Bowling is more or less monotonous from the sameness of play; in *croquet* the variety is endless. Then ladies can join in the latter, which they never do, so far as I know, in the former; and as a mixed house party of the sexes is infinitely preferable to a meet of bachelors by themselves, so *croquet* is preferable to bowls. I know men, however, who prefer the former. Well, we sha’n’t fight; choose either, you can’t go wrong. The most exacting old “tabby,” who watches with catlike eye for the tripping of the “parson,” will scarcely blame you for taking a hand at bowls or a mallet at *croquet* as some relaxation after work and toil.

In winter-time there are *skating* and *curling*, both admirable and thoroughly clerical amusements. Even amongst the most bigoted Presbyterian dissenters in Scotland both are permitted to their ministers. As to their respective merits, the former is good to the man who has never tasted the pleasures of the latter; but begin to curl, and you will never put skates on your feet again. Skating, of course, is an admirable exercise, and the gliding birdlike motion is at first delightful; but the perpetual repetition of the same thing, especially if on a limited sheet of ice, becomes tiresome after a time to the average human being. I find an hour quite enough. And then your thoughts are not much distracted. No doubt, if you set out to try something new, to cut out a difficult figure where there is a chance of a severe “cropper” in case of failure, your thoughts will be distracted from other things, and your attention fixed on this. But few are equal to such feats, and the chances of the threatened

“cropper” are too imminent to be run. In curling, again, while you are perfectly safe, the excitement is ever fresh and warm. I never saw an uninterested or unexcited player—a man who could think of anything else while engaged in the game. The skill required to give the right strength to the gliding stone—to overcome a bias in the ice—to get round another stone thirty yards off without cutting it, by the fore or back-hand twist, as you would screw round a ball at billiards—to lay the needful “guard”—to creep up through the narrow “port” just the breadth of your stone without fouling on any other—to take the artistic “wick” off some outsider, and in upon another and another, and so to “lie the shot” as you would do a difficult succession of cannons at billiards off cushion and balls—the generous rivalry—the keen, exhilarating frosty air—the buzz and flutter of excitement both among players and onlookers all around—the strange comic exclamations of wild delight when a good shot is played, and the lugubrious faces and words when a damaging one brings hopeless ruin to your side,—all combined make curling stand alone—a princely game, health-giving, distracting, glorious—a thing to dream upon, and, as many do, to go almost mad about.

All the year round, to the clergyman living in the country and possessing even the smallest bit of ground, a patch not exceeding a quarter of an acre, the exquisite and distracting pleasures of *garden-ing* are open. Here is a perennial source of delight, innocent, ennobling, increasing. To lay out your little patch of mother earth with taste and effect so as to make the most of it—and it is marvellous how much can be made out of the veriest “pocket-handkerchief” of a place—to plant and tend and watch your shrubs and flowers, from the first snowdrop in spring to the “last rose of summer”—to secure a constant continuance of bloom, when one flower fades to have another to take its place, so that some bright colour showing in the surrounding green, like a gem in its fair setting, shall never be wanting—altering walks, shifting plants, improving, even spoiling in your tentative experiments,—all this furnishes a charm difficult to express in words, and which only those who have experienced it can appreciate or understand. But you must work yourself to feel it and enjoy it thoroughly. Have a paid gardener certainly if you can afford it, but don’t leave all to that functionary. You will then be a stranger to the true joys of gardening—that love and interest in your plants and flowers which, from being nursed and tended by yourself, rivals the love and interest of a parent for his children. And then you want exercise to strengthen your muscles as well as distract the mind. So get hold of your spade and “do a turn” occasionally. Shoulder your rake and ditch-hoe, and trim your borders, or wage war against the weeds in your gravel walks. Keep a big pruning-knife in your pocket likewise, and as you wander

round your "place," lop off the decayed or ungraceful branches, or strip off carefully below that you may thicken and spread out the foliage above. For men of larger means, of course, there are the further, not higher—for against the dictum of the mathematician, the law holds good in gardening, that the less contains the greater as well as the greater the less—pleasures of green-houses, falling cascades, rustic bridges, mazy wildernesses, sloping lawns, artificial lakes, and an endless variety of other sources of delight.

"The man that hath no music in himself,
And is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils."

So say I of the man who has no soul, no taste for gardening. Clergyman or layman, he is a beast. Cut him. Have nothing to say to him. He would be a Müller or Palmer if opportunity only offered, or temptation impelled. Seriously, the man to whom, by the make of his being, such pleasures are denied, is deserving of profoundest pity, as we mourn for the blind, or sympathize with the deaf.

Here, then, is a goodly array of outdoor recreations consistent with our conditions,—decorous, distracting, health-giving. What do you say to them, my brother priests? I don't think I have stinted you; and I don't think I have suggested any in which you may not safely and becomingly indulge. Of course each man must judge for himself; and circumstances alter conditions, especially the elastic conditions of propriety. What is becoming in one man may not be in another, and what will do in one place, and with one class of people, might not do elsewhere. Exercise, therefore, a wise discretion, and indulge or abstain as you see occasion. It must never be forgotten that a clergyman's amusements, whatever they may be, must be made subservient to his work, both in kind and degree. A clergyman's first business is to attend to the interests of his parish and people up to the very best of his ability. He is set "to watch for souls, as one who must give account," and too great earnestness and zeal in prosecuting this solemn and responsible end can never be shown; but if he is known to do this, he will be allowed to do anything else he likes. Let him go always well-prepared to his pulpit; let him be scrupulously attentive to all his weekly parochial duties; let no one have occasion to say that he neglects one; that the business of the parish is not well and efficiently done; and then, for his recreation, I believe he may do anything—he may shoot, fish, even hunt. One of the most popular and respected clergymen I ever knew hunted regularly once a week with the county fox-hounds. But he did his work like a man on all other days. No one could lay his finger on a single instance of negligence, and his people found no fault with his hunting. "We know him to be a good man and true," they said, "and it is for himself to determine how he shall take his needful amusement." In truth, a minister's people, in the opinions

they form, are very much what their minister trains them to think. If he does his work as he ought, they will ask no questions about his pleasures ; nay, will approve all his proceedings, for they know their man, and have implicit confidence in him. Above all, in any case let a clergyman be perfectly open and above-board in whatever he does. There are some who indulge in what they think half-doubtful amusements on the sly. A clerical friend went with a large party a trial-trip not long since in one of the great American steamers. After luncheon, when he came on deck along with two or three more, he lit a cigar and began to smoke. A vulgar dissenting minister came up to him and said he was surprised to see him smoking in public :—

“I smoke in private, but I don’t like to do so in public, for fear of remark.”

“I am never ashamed to do in public,” was the manly reply, “what I think it right to do in private.”

This sort of thing is pitiful. If I were an English bishop, or a Scotch presbytery, I should depose every such man on the spot as a wretched and contemptible sneak, unworthy of his profession, or of the name of gentleman.

“Speak truth, and shame the devil,” says the proverb. Act truth, say I, and do the same by his sable majesty. “An honest man’s the noblest work of God.” A dishonest one is the dirtiest prentice-work of the father of lies. I know the cant talked about expediency with which such wretched folk seek to cloke their hypocrisy, but I can accept none that is not honest out-and-out. The other is a practical lie. Either indulge like a man if you can see no harm, or desist altogether if you find your usefulness would be marred. Even prejudices are to be regarded by the minister of religion ; and if doing this or the other interferes with your influence, even with stupid people, even with the weakest brethren, however innocent it may appear in your own eyes, and however attractive to your tastes, stop it, and stop it forthwith. It is not for an instant to be put into the scales and reckoned against your usefulness. But think of its coming out that you do *sub rosa*, in the dark, what you should scruple to do in the broad daylight ! For shame ! I cannot write of such conduct without an indignation that all but paralyzes my powers of expression. If we are to have expediency let it be an open and honest expediency—an expediency that has nothing to do with masks, or closed doors, or hole and corner meetings, but an expediency that can face the sunlight and invite scrutiny and inspection—the expediency which every true-hearted servant of his Master will be willing to practise in total self-denial and abnegation if occasion demands—the expediency set out in those noble words of the apostle, “If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”

THORNDALE.

AT SOUTH KENSINGTON, AUGUST 26, 1864.*

NOT for pride of rank or glitter of wealth that scene ;
 The day was *his*, and the great stream of plebeian life
 Came pouring in,—earnest, self-reliant manhood ;
 Meek, suffering, patient, glorious womanhood ;
 With joyous, careless childhood in their train.
 All eagerly breathing the perfumèd air,
 Which, like the cooling freshness of a desert spring—
 Silver-white and crystal clear—was unto them
 As the refilling of the cup of life.
 They stood, a tangled web of good and evil,
 And gazed with a grave wonderment and awe ;
 And as when in the aisle of an ancient shrine
 A perfumed offering is borne on the air,
 So there came on the breeze a thousand scents ;
 For each flower bent to her sister flower,
 And borrowèd a sweetness yet more rare,
 Tossing to the skies a carnival of incense
 From out their slender stalks and dewy leaves.
 Rich, dropping, ethereal music stole o'er the ear,
 'Till the very trees sang in gladness and joy,
 And the dance of sun-shadows threw cobwebs of gold
 O'er the silver tissue of the laughing cascades,
 Whose rippling streams danced and splash'd as they ran,
 And mingling with the joyous sunlight, made
 A golden network—a tessellated carpet.

* * * * *
 Grave, still, voiceless, look'd *he* down upon them ;
 Mighty in form, and on his lips a smile
 Wanting but a Promethean flame, it seem'd,
 Ere changing into words of love and blessing—
 A mighty spell lasting through life, mighty in death.
 And the sun, like an omen of joy, came and threw
 Golden arrows around his form, as if to show
 The seraph's glittering robe that now he wears.
 And all the people's woe came back tenfold ;

* The Horticultural Gardens were thrown open to the people on the anniversary of the late Prince Consort's birthday by the Queen's command.

And thought on swift pinion cast a holy spell,
 A sweet sadness, o'er the great surging throng,
 Fathoming their depth of love with strangest charm.
 Children, too sad to be rebellious, paused,
 And in vague reverence spake with hush'd delight ;
 For in their fathers' eyes brimm'd unshed tears,
 And they but faintly smiled upon them ;
 The bursts of music had a sadden'd cadence
 Unto them, and became a dirge of solace ;
 For memories glad and sad were swiftly borne
 On balmy winds, waking painful thoughts
 From out the half-closed book of Time.
 And the memory of that sad day came back
 When the muffled mantle of death swept by :
 That day, when men of iron nerve bow'd down
 In childlike terror at the shadow o'er the world ;
 That day, when a nation's heart was turn'd ; that day,
 When a nation's pulse stood still in silent horror ;
 When men in hush'd accents told of England's grief,
 With a hope weary and aching that their words were false.
 And with reverent love they spake of her,
 The dewiness of whose life hath pass'd away ;
 Who, with her hands outstretch'd imploringly,
 Still graspeth nothing save cold, black misery ;
 Who, mourning over buried hopes full of one image,
 And with a spirit out of tune with mirth or joy,
 Now heareth but one voice—seeth but one face,
 Yet knoweth still the noble alchemy
 Of transmuting into blessings unto others
 This her bitter woe—her deepest sorrow.
 Time cannot break the potent charm, or bear away
 On his rapid wing the thought of what *he* was.
 For ever in the measureless march of Time
 Will stand *his* memory, distinct and clear.
 At *his* name thought shall ever trail her wings,
 Nor wear the shadowy garments of the past.
 Victoria ! belovèd Queen !
 Each tear that thou hast shed for him so good and pure
 Hath added to thy crown a rare and priceless gem.
 That day became thy offering—not ours—
 To a stainless soul, whose most inner chamber
 Knew no guile, and was unstain'd with sin.
 'Twas not thy noble queenship, but thy glorious wifhood
 That gauged the tribute we should pay that day
 To him so deeply mourn'd, so early lost.

And from on high he hath look'd down upon thee,
And smiled, and gather'd with a miser's care
Thy people's praise and love ; and with a holy pride
Hath laid them at his heavenly Father's feet.
In a rough crucible hath thy love been tried,
O sovereign lady ; through the heated furnace
With it thou hast walk'd untouch'd,
And thou knowest it the lasting sorrow of thy life ;
The shadowy arrow must probe thy heart for ever,
For no man is there who may draw it forth.
Yet He who ruleth all—the King of kings,
The Lord of lords, shall send from His throne to thee
An angel of comfort, who shall in thine heart
Fold its wings, and soothe with the warmth of its plumage.
Then brighten, O Queen, the cold grey ashes of thy grief ;
Tune again with joy thy broken heart-strings :
For while his praise through England's land is heard,
Their melody hath not wholly pass'd away.
Light up with festal breadth thy shadowy life ;
Soothe thy stripes with the balm of joyful hope :
For to *him*, the loosening of the silver cord,
The breaking of the golden bowl, was but the glad
Fulfilment of a long and joyful dream.

M. R. C.



HELEN CARR.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

THE down platform of the King's Cross station in London was thronged with a crowd of travellers on one glorious summer afternoon fourteen years ago. Doubtless on many similar afternoons before and since, there has been precisely the same busy scene on that platform, the same pushing and crushing, the same variety of faces, anxious and merry, young and old, and the same air of bustle and confusion pervading all; but it is with that especial afternoon, the 27th of July, 1851, that our story has to do.

The down train was on the point of starting, when a young lady hurried across the platform towards the first-class carriages, and paused with her hand on the door of one of them. "Does this train stop at Deanswood?" she inquired of a passing porter.

The man told her that it did, and then she stepped into the somewhat crowded compartment, for Helen Carr was one of those who thought there was safety in numbers, and took her seat near the window. She was a very pretty girl, tall and slight; she had wavy chestnut hair, and honest dark blue eyes, which looked earnestly at you when she spoke, and were only wont to fall at the sound of their own praises. Sundry newspapers were offered for Miss Carr's perusal by her fellow-travellers, but all were politely declined; one or two of her nearest neighbours made stray remarks with the view of drawing her into conversation; but short though courteous answers were all they could obtain in return, and by-and-bye they respected her evident wish to be let alone, and left her to herself and her own thoughts, while the train sped on its way through the glorious summer sunshine and the lengthening shadows.

Helen Carr did not lack food for reverie. A hasty telegram had summoned her to the bedside of one of her dearest friends, and, mingling with her grief at her approaching loss, came thoughts of the future which lay beyond,—for ere long she was to be a wife, so it had been settled, and go with her husband to distant lands.

Helen Carr was an orphan, her father and mother having died within a few weeks of each other when she was a mere infant. Her mother's sister, Mrs. Ross, had had the care of her ever since, and with her Helen had found a fostering, affectionate home.

Mrs. Ross was a widow who had seen bitter trouble. Her husband was taken from her by a malignant fever in the second year of their marriage, and twenty years afterwards, their only child, a fair young daughter, clandestinely married a man of a character so questionable that he had long been an outcast from the society of Deanswood and its environs. The pair sought Mrs. Ross that the young wife might sue for forgiveness when her vows were irrevocable, but intense grief and anger nerved the gentle widow to the one hard act of her life. She shut her door against her daughter, and vowed that she would never see her again. "I had rather she had died," was the sole answer which attempted mediation could wring from her; and the words came from the depths of a breaking heart. The pair wandered away to the Continent, it was said, and meanwhile the widow strove to harden her heart, and to forget that she had ever had a daughter.

It was just after this time of trouble that Helen Carr, as a helpless orphan, was cast upon Mrs. Ross's care. "She shall live with me," said the widow, when she heard of her niece's helplessness, "and I will see that she wants nothing; but I shall never have the heart to love anything again."

By-and-bye, however, the child's winning ways gained for her a sure place in the bereaved heart, and as Helen Carr grew to womanhood, the widow felt almost as much pride in her as she had once felt in the lost Adelaide.

Then, as years crept on, a new generation of young men of the neighbourhood seemed to have made up their minds that Deanswood Cottage was a pleasant place at which to make a morning call, and Mrs. Ross began to tremble. Suppose her orphan niece should involve her in such another trouble as that which had well-nigh broken her heart just nineteen years before?

But Helen was not likely to err as Adelaide had done. She was frank and open as the day; and the first thing she did when John Locksley, the surgeon's son, asked her to be his wife, was to lay the whole matter before Mrs. Ross and seek her counsel. "I like him, auntie," she frankly confessed, "rather much, you know, but I should like to do what you think right."

The flush on Helen's cheeks, and the tremor in her voice and manner, betrayed to Mrs. Ross that there was true, earnest love in the case, and so she sent for Mr. John Locksley and questioned him concerning his prospects. She knew that she could trust him to tell her the plain, unvarnished truth, and so he did. It was his intention to emigrate to New Zealand, he said; he had always had a fancy for the colonies, and his father's brother had settled there and was flourishing. When he came of age he would inherit a small property bequeathed to him by a rich godmother, and it had been settled that the money should be laid out in the purchase of a New Zealand farm,

his uncle selecting and buying it for him ; and that he should then sail at once, and take possession of it. He did not wish, he went on, to expose Helen to discomforts and privations, so he was afraid he must not ask her to go with him on his first voyage ; but he thought he would be able to get a nice home for her in a year or so, and then he would come back and fetch her if she would wait for him. He hoped he had not done wrong by wishing to make sure of her ; he was afraid somebody else should carry off the prize ; and he loved her very much, he added, in his downright matter-of-fact way.

Mrs. Ross listened attentively, and gave a hearty consent to his marriage with Helen, for she liked John Locksley, but she ventured to suggest an alteration in his plans. She did not like long engagements, she told him. She would much rather that Helen should become Helen Locksley, and go out with him on his first voyage ; and she thought it might be managed, if she were to spare them a portion of her income till the New Zealand farm became sufficiently remunerative to enable them to live in comfort. "At any rate," she concluded, "wait a little while before you decide ; nearly a year must pass away before you come of age, and we don't know what may be in store for us between now and then. Whenever anything happens to me, Helen will inherit all I possess, and then she will be able to do as she likes. I have no one else to leave it to." The widow's voice faltered, as she thought of her erring daughter.

The twelve months had nearly gone by when Mrs. Ross was seized with a fatal illness. There was no hope for her, her doctor (John Locksley's father) told Helen ; she might linger a long time—a few months perhaps, but ultimate recovery was well-nigh impossible. For weeks Helen watched and tended her with all a daughter's care ; then Mrs. Ross began to fancy that her young niece showed symptoms of languor and weakness, and insisted that she should go for a few days to some friends in London for change of scene.

It was not till Helen saw that her continued resistance to the proposal worried her aunt, that she consented to go, and even then it was with a heart full of misgivings.

"You will find me as you leave me, please God, darling," were Mrs. Ross's parting words to her. "I wouldn't send you away if there were any immediate danger, but Mr. Locksley assures me there is none. You will find me as you leave me."

But Helen had not been in London twenty-four hours, before a message, sent by John Locksley, reached her :—

"Mrs. Ross is dying. You must come directly."

That was the telegram which had caused her hasty journey in the down express on that sunny summer day. Afternoon had melted into evening, and the moon was rising over the hills, as the train drew near Deanswood, and one by one the familiar objects of her own locality grew out of the twilight on either side. The undulating

meadows, the river, the village houses, the village church, the signal lights of the station, then the station itself, and John Locksley, with anxious face, on the platform.

“How is she, John?” was Helen’s first question, as he grasped her hand.

“Worse—much worse,” was his answer; “she is alive, and that is all. My father says there is no hope. We must hasten, Helen: the servant is down here—come to meet you,—he can carry your bag.”

“Will she know me?” asked poor Helen through her tears, as they left the station behind them and turned into the Deanswood Road.

“She knew me when I was there an hour ago,” said John, “and charged me with many loving messages to you; but you will be in time, I hope, Helen.”

“Oh yes! don’t tell me now, I couldn’t bear to hear them. Oh, John, she was as much as a mother to me. What shall I do when she’s gone?”

“I will try to take her place, Helen,” he said, quietly. Many men would have made all kinds of pretty speeches on a like occasion, but John Locksley had never made a pretty speech in his life; he had great faith in his plain, unvarnished English. “I will work hard for you, Helen,—lead an honest, upright life, please God, and you shall help me.”

She pressed his arm by way of answer, and then they went on in silence for a long way. A hundred yards or so from Mrs. Ross’s house, however, John Locksley stopped, and said abruptly,—

“Helen, I *must* tell you before you go on. You mustn’t be surprised to find an addition to the household;” and he added, in a low tone, “This morning your aunt got a letter from her daughter, written just as she was dying—abroad somewhere,—and she has sent her son, to make peace, I suppose, and Mrs. Ross tells me she has forgiven her.”

“Oh, John, I’m so glad—so thankful!” Helen clasped her hands in the fervour of her joy. “You don’t know how I have longed for this. Why didn’t you tell me before?”

“I thought it best to put it off till now,” said John, rather shortly, his face half averted.

To tell the truth, the subject was not pleasant to him. To tell the truth, there was a spice of selfishness at the root of his dislike to it, for John Locksley was subject to mortal failings like the rest of us, and the thought had struck him that, as Mrs. Ross had forgiven her daughter, it was just possible that Helen might lose the fortune which had been promised her.

John Locksley was not a mercenary man in a general way, but

this money had made a great part of his calculations and schemes for his future life, and the loss of it would involve a considerable change in all, and the entire overthrow of some.

Helen was so busy with her own thoughts, that she made no further comment upon his reticence, and a few minutes afterwards they were in Mrs. Ross's house, making inquiries with hushed voices.

Mr. Locksley senior met Helen on the stairs.

"She is sensible," he whispered, "quite so; but I fear it is only the wavering flicker before the light goes out."

"Helen's quick steps soon brought her to the hushed and solemn room. There was but little outward change in Mrs. Ross; her pale face seemed only a little paler, her slender hand only a little weaker, than when Helen went away. There was one change, and that for the better. The weary, woeful expression which care had written on her countenance, was all gone, and peace had settled there. Helen thought the cause was to be traced to the forgiveness she had accorded at last, and to the presence of the little golden-haired child whose head nestled trustfully on his grandmother's shoulder.

"Helen, I knew you'd come," said Mrs. Ross, as Helen knelt beside her. "You are only just in time, darling. I have longed for you so much." But Helen's head only sank lower and lower; she could not find voice for words.

"Helen, dear, you *must* listen; you must hear what I have to say. Lift up your head, and then I shall know you understand me."

Helen did so, and Mrs. Ross drew from beneath her pillow a letter, and handed it to her.

"It is from my Adelaide, Helen; she of whom I vowed never to hear more; but she sent it by a trusty messenger, and with it this darling,"—Mrs. Ross's feeble hand stroked the boy's curls;—"and, Helen, I could resist no longer. I was thinking of her a good deal yesterday, and was beginning to see that it is not for such as I—with a load of sin of my own—to be so severe. Would that I had seen this sooner! she is dead and gone now."

"In heaven it will be all right, auntie," faltered Helen, softly.

"Yes, I think so, I trust so, for our Saviour's sake," murmured Mrs. Ross, humbly; and then she went on, her voice weaker than before,—

"Never destroy that letter, Helen; read it when I am gone. And now I am going to confide a trust to you; I know you will fulfil it for my sake. Will you treat this boy in every way as I should have treated him if that miserable cloud had never come between me and his mother? Will you carry out the spirit of her letter—as I should have done if life had been spared me? It is not for us to *atone* for the past, but we can at least make amends. Helen, will you promise?"

“Yes, aunt, I do, faithfully; you may trust me;” and Helen’s honest eyes confirmed her words.

“My darling! I knew you would. Thank you.” And then, with Helen’s hand firmly locked in her own, Mrs. Ross seemed to fall into a peaceful sleep. She only spoke once more, to ask for some of her favourite texts, which Helen, with a violent effort, forced herself to repeat. “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.” That was the last; with the words in her ears Mrs. Ross sank into unconsciousness.

An hour more, and she was gone; and John Locksley’s hands grasped Helen’s, and led her away.

In the stillness of her own room, before she went to bed that night, Helen read poor Adelaide Clinton’s letter. It was dated from Milan, and written evidently by a trembling hand:—

“MY DEAREST MOTHER,—So I must call you, in spite of all that has passed, for my experience of life has taught me the exceeding value of the love and kindness which I so recklessly flung away.

“I have been too proud to write to you before, but pain and sorrow have crushed me at last. I am not writing now to beg any favour for myself, but for my boy. He is my only one now; five more—three sisters and two brothers—sleep in the English Cemetery at Paris, and my husband sleeps with them. I will not write much of him. I will not even ask you to think kindly of him; but I could not die peacefully if I did not tell you that, with all his faults (and God knows he had many), he was ever a kind husband to me.

“For myself, mother, I am a dying woman, worn out with grief and trouble. Before many more days have gone by, I shall be laid to rest here in this strange city, where nobody knows me, and where there is nobody who will care.

“I have confided all subsequent arrangements to a maid-servant whom I believe I can trust. As soon as I am gone, she will start for Deanswood with my boy and this letter. I do not send to you before, for I could not bear a repulse, and while there is only uncertainty I can believe that you will forgive me, take care of my boy, and not let him suffer for his mother’s fault; and I shall believe too, mother, that when we meet in heaven all this miserable estrangement will be as though it had never been. I say *we*, though I know I have no right to go there; but I have been thinking a good deal lately of the lessons and truths I learnt at home, and some of the labourers in the vineyard were hired at the eleventh hour, were they not?

“I am writing from my bed, and am so weak and faint that my hand will hold the pen no longer.

“YOUR ADELAIDE.”

Over and over again Helen Carr read that letter—over and over again, till her brain almost refused to take in the sense of it; and then she pushed it away from her, buried her face in her hands, and revolved in her mind all her aunt’s parting words; for, looked at in the light of Adelaide Clinton’s letter, they seemed to her to bear a new and terrible significance.

“Will you treat this boy in every way as I should have treated him if that miserable cloud had never come between me and his mother? Will you carry out the spirit of her letter as I should

have done if life had been spared me?" Mrs. Ross had asked her, and Helen had faithfully promised, had given her solemn word of honour that she would.

Once more she read over Adelaide Clinton's letter; it was just possible that she had taken a wrong view of it; but no, it still appeared to her, as it had appeared before, that the spirit of it was to beg that the child might not suffer for his mother's fault. If the estrangement had never been, who would have inherited Mrs. Ross's property—thus Helen reasoned in her honest heart—but Adelaide Clinton; and after her, her son? And if Mrs. Ross, having perfectly forgiven her daughter, had lived to carry out the spirit of her letter, and treat the boy without any reference to his mother's fault, would she not have altered her will, bequeathing all her property—or at any rate the greater part of it—to her grandson, remembering her niece perhaps by a trifling legacy? Reasoning thus, it seemed to Helen Carr that, according to strict honour and honesty, the boy should still inherit all, and that she could not touch a penny of it without robbing him. She doubted not that, in her aunt's existing will, the whole of the property was left to her; and she knew that, in that case, the law of England would give it to her; but it was a question of conscience, not of law. The reconciliation between mother and daughter had come too late to allow of an alteration in the will, so Mrs. Ross had entrusted her wishes to her niece's high principle, possibly forgetting, in the weakness of her last hours, the trouble which might thereby be caused. That was the light in which Helen looked at the matter, and she felt that she would sooner die than betray the trust.

And yet it was a terrible blow to her, this sudden change in her prospects;—all her bright hopes of happiness as John Locksley's wife dashed to the ground—for many years, at any rate; no relatives who could give her a hospitable shelter till brighter times came—nothing to depend upon but her own exertions.

The tempter was busy in Helen Carr's room that night; and over and over again she fought against the conviction which had forced itself upon her. Was all this fearful self-sacrifice absolutely necessary? Was there no loophole through which an escape might be made? Why should she suffer instead of Adelaide Clinton's child?

But at last the honest heart refused to fight against honour any longer, and Helen Carr flung herself on her knees and prayed for strength to keep her resolve.

A long time she knelt, till the summer dawn struggled with the light of her wasting candle, and then, weary and worn out, she lay down and sank to sleep.

And meanwhile John Locksley, on the opposite side of the road, had been congratulating himself that Mrs. Ross had died without altering her will.

CHAPTER II.

"WANTED AN ORGANIST for the Parish Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Minsterleigh. Salary £50 per annum. Good references, musical and otherwise, indispensable.—Address, The Rector, St. Michael's Parsonage, Minsterleigh."

SUCH was an advertisement which appeared in a midland county newspaper in the October following Mrs. Ross's death. The rector of St. Michael's had plenty of applications for the situation, and among them a letter written on paper having a very deep mourning border, and signed "Helen Carr." The writer frankly stated that she had never filled such a post before, but that unexpected circumstances had obliged her to seek employment to gain a livelihood, and, having studied under good masters, she thought she might be found capable of conducting the musical part of the St. Michael's services ; she concluded by giving the needful references.

The young rector liked the frank tone of the letter ; slipped it into a packet of applications labelled "apparently suitable," and wrote to Miss Carr, to appoint a day for her to display her powers on the St. Michael's organ, in turn with the other applicants. He seemed to know that he was addressing a lady, and felt constrained to add that he was sorry to subject her to such an ordeal, but that the appointment did not rest wholly with him, and there were others in the parish who would only be able to judge of the various candidates by such a means.

It was with some trepidation that Helen read his letter, and it required a desperate effort to make up her mind to go to Minsterleigh, as was proposed ; but she summoned her courage at last, and began to practise vigorously in preparation for the ordeal.

Poor Helen ! She had undergone a terrible trial in that summer which was now fading into autumn. Firm and unshaken in the resolve which she made on the night of her aunt's death, when the funeral was over, and the will, bequeathing all Mrs. Ross's property to her, had been read, she communicated it to John Locksley.

He refused to look at the matter in the light in which she looked at it, and expressed his disapproval in plain terms.

"If Mrs. Ross had told me," he said, when he and Helen began to talk the matter over, "that she wished her grandson to inherit all her property—if she had signified it to me by one single word only—I would have been the first to persuade you to regard that will as so much waste paper, and to throw it into the fire, though, I tell you, Helen, I should have thought it a cruel injustice to you ; but for you to build up a theory of your own upon a fanciful interpretation of a dying woman's words, I call it preposterous. When I see a

thing plain and straight before me, I can act up to it ; but I never had a turn for sentiment and romance."

Their argument met the fate of many other arguments ; it grew into a quarrel, and high, angry words passed between them. John Locksley was one of those who never give up a point, and Helen, though gentle and yielding where trifles only were concerned, could be firm enough when right and wrong hung in the balance.

Another time, and yet another, John Locksley sought her and urged his persuasions, but all in vain.

At last, in an excited moment, when he was so angry that he scarcely knew what he was saying, he ventured upon a threat that, if she did not give up the point, he would not marry her.

Of course Helen's pride took fire. More high words followed, bitter remarks which years would scarcely rub out of their memories, and then they parted—for ever, they said ; and six weeks afterwards John Locksley sailed for New Zealand, without a single farewell word to Helen, his heart full of bitterness towards her, and persuading himself all the time that she had ceased to love him, and would not care. He should have seen her standing at her bedroom window, her head bowed, and her hands clasped in mute anguish, watching the train which bore him from Deanswood as it glided away ; and he should have heard the low wail which escaped from her lips when it was out of sight. All her hopes seemed to have gone with that receding train ; all the bright fancies which she had woven of happy days and years to be spent as John Locksley's wife ; all the airy castles of domestic felicity in the New Zealand wilds ; all these, and everything else, it seemed to Helen just then ;—and she was left well-nigh penniless, with only her own exertions to depend upon, the bare world before her, and her love for the man who had parted from her so cruelly, stronger than ever.

Many kind-hearted friends pressed invitations upon her—so many that she scarcely knew how to answer them. She could not accept all, for Helen was of too high a spirit to brook the idea of living upon her friends, but she selected one which offered a seaside sojourn,—necessary to her health, her friends urged,—and also a cheerful circle, in which she would be able to regain her spirits, and, at the same time, seek for employment.

There were many duties to be performed at Deanswood before she left. She had constituted herself the sole protector of Adelaide Clinton's child ; and her first step was to place him under the care of friends who would give him a home-like training, and at the same time fit him for future school and college days. Then she consulted an old friend of her aunt's ; and under his advice invested the child's fortune, that the interest might accumulate until he came of age ; and last of all, she sold the cottage and land at Deans-

wood, the proceeds being laid by, to meet his present wants and the expenses of his education.

It was during her sojourn with her seaside friends that she saw the advertisement respecting an organist for the church of St. Michael, Minsterleigh; and it was from their house, and in company with one of the members of their household, that she set off to take the first step towards gaining her own livelihood.

It was a bleak autumn evening when she and her friend reached Minsterleigh. They had been detained on the road, and were later than they had intended; the lamps were lighted, and gleamed upon them through a watery mist, as they drove through the streets to an hotel.

"I wonder whether that is St. Michael's," said Helen, pointing to the tower of a church which grew out of the fog on their right, as they stopped at the hotel door.

Upon inquiry they found that it was, and Helen took a last look at it before she went to bed, and dreamed all night of the ordeal which was awaiting her on the morrow.

By two o'clock it was over, and the last echoes of the organ had died away among the arches of the dim old church. The decision of the young rector and his parishioners was not to be made known till evening; and it was with a fluttering heart that Helen watched the autumn day fade into twilight. There were a great many candidates—twenty in all—and at least half of them Helen had thought quite equal to herself. She had chosen to play a grand piece of one of the old masters—one of those pieces which seem like words from an unknown tongue, too beautiful, and too far above all earthly things, to bear translation.

Six o'clock came and went, and Helen's heart began to fail: it would not be pleasant to have to go back unsuccessful; but at seven a waiter came and announced the rector of St. Michael's, and the tall young clergyman, with his honest, open-hearted face and kindly grey eyes, came into the room with congratulatory words upon his lips:—

"Miss Carr, I am most happy to say that, after a due amount of contending opinions, necessary to the conferences of such an enlightened body of individuals, my parish officers have given a unanimous verdict in your favour. I hope I need not say," continued the young rector, politely, "which way my own inclinations tended; if I had been deaf to the merits of that glorious piece, rendered as you rendered it, I should have dubbed myself a Goth for life."

With a flush of pleasure on her face, Helen thanked him gratefully. She was not one to deny herself merit when she felt that it rightfully belonged to her—not one to say that she wondered how

her poor performance could have won her such praise. Such remarks always seemed to her to savour of dishonesty. She had a happy consciousness that she had played very well indeed, and she was thankful for the strength which had been given her.

The young rector stayed about twenty minutes, carrying on a kindly, pleasant chat with the ladies, and then he rose to go.

"I do not think Miss Carr will lack kind neighbours among us Minsterleigh folk, Mrs. Dale," he said, as he pressed her friend's hand. "I can answer for her having one—my sister, Mary Vere. I mustn't say too much about her, as I am her brother; but I think you will hear that she is the sunbeam of the parish. At any rate, Miss Carr," he added, as he shook hands with her, "you must take us for good-natured folks till you find us otherwise."

The next day was taken up in securing nice suitable lodgings for the new organist; and on the next, Helen took her friend to the station on her homeward journey, and then went back into the city to her new home, with the strange, sad feeling in her heart of being all alone in the world. The loneliness, however, did not last long; the afternoon brought Mary Vere—in truth a sunbeam, as her brother had called her. She was followed by a boy laden with a basket of indoor flowers.

"I don't know whether you like flowers, Miss Carr," she said, "but I think they make a new room look so homelike. If you had come earlier in the year you should have had better ones, but these are the best I have got."

Helen thanked her gratefully; it was so pleasant to find that there were kind hearts everywhere; and the two girls were friends directly. By-and-bye Helen bethought herself of tea.

"Oh, I should like some so much!" said Miss Vere. "Do you know, I told Edmund that I thought I should have tea with you, for I fancied you would not feel so lonely then; and I told him, if I was not home as early as usual, he was to come here and fetch me. You see, we have designs upon you already," she added, laughingly.

In a few weeks Helen Carr found that she would have visitors enough. Her Sunday playing on the organ charmed the congregation of St. Michael's; and Mr. Vere and his sister having set the fashion of calling upon her, most of their middle-class neighbours followed their example. Moreover, rumours got afloat of the love-story which had driven the organist out into the world, and the half-understood romance threw a delightful air of mystery and interest around her.

Before the winter was over, Helen Carr had made herself well known and much liked in Minsterleigh.

The St. Michael's poor had learnt to love her honest eyes, pleasant

voice, and winning ways ; and the wealthy ones of the parish had found out that the young organist was a lady in every sense of the word, and welcomed her to their houses accordingly. They invited her to their parties, being quite willing to number her tall, graceful figure among their guests ; but these invitations Helen declined : it was not that she disliked society—she was very fond of it, in fact ; but her sensitive nature shrank from the remarks which might be made upon her position by those above her in social rank. It seemed hard, sometimes, to resist the temptation of musical evenings, and to sit at home by her lonely lamp and her lonely work-basket, but when Helen made up her mind to any course, it was her nature to keep to it, and she was faithful to it now.

And so the years went on, and no tidings ever came to her of John Locksley or his whereabouts. And yet she loved him still, as much as ever. In her hot anger she had returned his presents and letters, all but one little locket, with his hair in it, which she had retained ; it was a small, simple one, of little or no value, a birthday present when they were scarcely more than boy and girl, but she always wore it suspended from a slender chain round her neck, and it was always under her pillow at night. Sometimes, too, her Minsterleigh friends would lend her a newspaper, and Helen's hands would tremble as she unfolded it ;—suppose it should contain an account of his marriage or death ! But no news of any sort came to her, and she made up her mind that he had quite forgotten her, and was happy in the wilds, busily winning gold to build up a splendid fortune.

Every day her prayers went to Heaven for him, that he might have strength given him to keep his soul pure amidst it all.

Ten years passed away, and Helen's thirty-second birthday came round. She had altered but very little in those ten years ; the tall, graceful figure was graceful still—a little rounder and fuller, that was all,—and there was not the slightest streak of grey in her chestnut hair. “Miss Carr is just the same, only nicer, because we know her better,” was the verdict of Minsterleigh generally ; and the rector of St. Michael's held the same opinion, but in a magnified degree.

On her birthday morning the postman brought the organist a disagreeable letter, from the master of the school where Mrs. Ross's grandson was being educated. It ran thus :—

“MADAM,—I regret much to have to inform you, that on Tuesday, the 19th inst., Henry Clinton left my house without the knowledge of myself or any member of my establishment, and has not since been heard of, though the most vigilant search has been made for him ; the only clue we can obtain is that he inquired the nearest route to Liverpool of a man whom he met in the road, from which fact we come to the conclusion that he has run away to sea, he having always displayed an enthusiastic passion for all maritime matters.

“May I beg that you will not disturb yourself unnecessarily in consequence of this untoward circumstance; but be assured that I will do everything in my power to track the truant, and the first tidings shall be immediately transmitted to you.

“Begging to offer my best compliments,

“I remain, madam,

“Your most obedient Servant,

“CHARLES DODD.”

The letter reached Helen just as she was starting for the church for her usual Saturday's practice on the organ. It grieved her much, for the warm-hearted boy, in her ten years' dealings with him, had wound himself round her heart, and made himself very dear to her. Her first impulse was to invent some plan of her own for tracing the path he had taken, and not to rest till she found him; but upon a second perusal of Mr. Dodd's letter, it seemed to her that there was nothing she could do; he had taken the matter quite out of her hands. If she could have chosen, she would far rather have had all the trouble of the pursuit thrown upon her, than be obliged to sit still at Minsterleigh, and trust to other people.

However, she had not time to give way to her grief and anxiety just then, for the Saturday's practice was a necessity; but many tears dropped upon the keys as she played, and she could not train her thoughts to her work. She had just finished a voluntary of Mozart's, and her hands had dropped listlessly in her lap, when a quick step sounded on the stairs, the curtains were pushed aside, and Mr. Vere stood before her.

“Miss Carr, you in trouble!” he exclaimed, as she turned her tearful eyes upon him.

Helen explained, for she had grown to look upon Mary Vere's brother almost as if he were her own; and she gave him Mr. Dodd's letter to read.

He read it over—twice or thrice Helen thought, for he was a long time about it—and then he returned it to her, saying gravely,—

“Miss Carr, I should like very much to help to bear your troubles.”

She looked at him wonderingly, and then his long pent-up story came flowing from his lips in eager, passionate words. How he had loved her almost ever since she came to Minsterleigh, and how his love for her had grown greater year by year, and how insurmountable obstacles had alone prevented him from speaking before; but now the obstacles were removed; his sister was going to marry, and leave him, and would Helen be his wife, and take her place at the parsonage?

At first Helen had tried to check his rapid current of words, but finding it impossible, she had sat listening to him, a bright flush on her cheeks, and her hands nervously playing with each other.

When he had finished he bent towards her, expecting her answer,

and Helen forced herself to speak. She thanked him for his good opinion of her ; and then, in broken sentences, she told him the whole truth, the whole story which Minsterleigh had been so eager to know,—how she had loved before, had been on the point of marriage with the one she loved, and how she loved him still, in spite of the hot anger in which they had parted. She explained the cause of the disagreement, and added, that she knew the probability was that they would never meet again in this world, but she could not think of anybody else.

“But, Miss Carr,” the rector pleaded, “what you have told me has only increased my love and respect for you tenfold. Is it wise to sacrifice your future life to a buried—pardon me, you told me it was buried—to a buried hope?”

“Yes,” she said, “it *is* buried. I never think of seeing him again, but I could never care for anybody else—not in that way, I mean. Mr. Vere, I esteem and—and I like you very, very much, but you ask of me more than I can give.”

Once again the rector pleaded ; he had put the question to her suddenly, when she was unprepared for it ; would she take time to think of it ? He would wait as long as she pleased, if only she would give him hope.

“No,” said Helen, softly, her voice quivering, for she saw how earnest he was, and she was sorry for him, “time will make no difference. I would do anything almost for you and Mary—anything but this. Mr. Vere, you must not think me unkind ; I don’t mean it. I have valued your friendship so much, and I can never forget your kindness to me since I have been here.”

“It has been returned to us doubled, Miss Carr,” he said, and then he pressed her hand, and left her ; but on going down the stairs five minutes later, feeling that further practice was impossible that day, Helen found him waiting at the church door. He walked home with her, carrying her music-books as he had often done before, and gave her hand another lingering, affectionate grasp as they parted at her own door.

Three years further on, three years unmarked by tidings either of John Locksley or Henry Clinton, and Helen Carr was laid low upon the bed of sickness. She had caught a violent cold which brought on rheumatic fever, and for a week she lay between life and death.

One of her old friends, a kind, motherly old lady, came many miles to nurse her and take care of her, and Minsterleigh friends vied with each other in their kindnesses. Mary, the rector’s sister, but Mary Vere no longer, sent loving messages of inquiry from her far-off home, and the rector himself, on his own account, called twice

daily at Miss Carr's door, and sent kindly offerings—sometimes a bouquet of splendid flowers, sometimes a tiny nosegay of hedge-violets gathered with his own hands, and sometimes a dish of fruit, a present to himself from some wealthy neighbour.

After a great deal of care and attention, Helen began to mend; but returning health disclosed a sad misfortune: rheumatism had taken such a violent hold of her that it had left both her wrists perfectly useless—at any rate, as far as organ-playing was concerned,—and the doctors gave no hope of their ever regaining their former strength.

It troubled Helen dreadfully. What was she to do? How hard it would be to begin the world afresh!

“Trust in God, my child,” said her old lady friend, over and over again; “He sends the trouble, and He will find a way out of it.”

And Helen tried to trust, but it seemed very hard nevertheless.

One afternoon, the first of her coming down-stairs, as she was sitting in front of the fire in her easy chair, she said to her old friend,—

“I wonder what made me dream so of John Locksley last night? Just when I fell asleep after tea I dreamed that he came into the room with you, and I heard you talking in a quiet whisper; and I heard him say, ‘Poor thing! poor Helen!’ and then I heard his footsteps as he went away, as plainly as if I were awake and he were really there.”

“My dear, suppose I were to tell you that you were more awake than asleep, and that he *was* really there?”

“I should say you were joking, dearie.”

Then, as she caught a strange look on the old lady's face, her eyes grew suddenly large and anxious: “He wasn't, was he? Don't trifle with me, please.”

“He was,” said a manly, cheery voice close behind her; and the next moment Helen's poor weak hands were clasped in a pair of strong hearty ones, and a weatherbeaten face, dark with beard and moustaches, was bent down to kiss her.

“Helen, my own, I'm come back in the character of a man who has found out how wrong he was at a certain critical part of his life, and who is truly thankful to discover that he is not too late to regain the treasure he so thoughtlessly flung from him. Helen, for a long time I wondered how it was that all my bright prospects in New Zealand failed to please me; but at last I found out that it was because I had not you to share them with me. Will you forgive and forget?”

Their old friend left them then, and stayed in her own room for an hour, but when she came back she found them just the same

as before. Helen, with her hands clasped in John's, and John standing on the rug, looking down at her. It was all settled then. John had made a moderate fortune in New Zealand, and intended to remain in England for the future, and they were to be married in the course of the summer.—But not at St. Michael's, Minsterleigh. Helen stipulated that, and told John the reason.

“The sharp-eyed parson!” remarked John. “He showed his taste, but I'm very glad he didn't get you!”

“Helen, can you bear anything more to-night?” her old friend asked her, as the evening wore on.

Helen nodded.

“Because, dear, John can tell you something of poor Harry Clinton.”

“Oh, John, can you?” Helen turned her eager eyes upon him. “Do let me hear.”

“You must keep yourself quiet, my own, and then you shall hear all. The way I made acquaintance with him was this:—It was in our last New Zealand summer, in the week which I hoped was to be the last of my colonial sojourn, when I had made up my mind that I could never forget you, and should never rest till I had come to England, sought you out, and persuaded you to forgive and forget all that had passed. I had made arrangements with the captain of a homeward bound vessel, and my passage money was paid. I was paying a farewell visit to my sheepwalks one morning, when a lad on a rough pony came up to me and inquired the way to the nearest town. We began talking, and he told me his history. That he had run away from school and gone to sea, and that he had run away from his ship at Auckland, and intended to make his fortune in New Zealand; but with all his openness, the lad concealed his name, and everything that might serve as a clue to possible pursuers. I took a fancy to him, and told him that if he liked to stay the night with me I thought I could get him employment the next day with a friend of mine. The boy was as grateful as if I had made him Governor at once, and we rode home together. Within twenty yards of my own dwelling my horse threw me, and I lay on the ground with a broken leg. We had not the best surgical skill near us, and the accident induced a violent illness, which forced me to forfeit my passage in the homeward bound vessel. I don't believe I should have been here now but for that grateful lad. He stayed with me, and tended me as if he had been my son. The little bit of impulsive kindness I had shown him was repaid me tenfold.

“Just as I was recovering, he fell ill with a fever, which was raging around us, and it was my turn to tend him; but I was not much used to that sort of work, and I am afraid he had but a rough nurse, poor fellow! For days and nights he tossed on his hard bed in the wildest

delirium, and the doctor came, and shook his head at him over and over again. I could not make out what he said in his delirious ravings, his words were so rapid and incoherent; not till the last night of his life at least, and then—bending over him to moisten his poor dry lips—I caught the words ‘Helen’ and ‘Deanswood.’ You may think how I listened for more after that, but no more came. The poor lad laid his head on my shoulder an hour afterwards, and died.

“It was not till he was gone that I thought of Henry Clinton, and then I rifled his pockets and found letters which showed me that it was he and no other.

“Helen, I can’t tell you what I felt when I saw that boy lying dead before me in the moonlight. While he was but a stranger to me I would have done a great deal to save him; then I felt that I would give all I possessed if it could bring him back to life.

“The next day, poor lad, I buried him in a nook among the hills, with trees shading him, and a brook making music a little way off. We were in the wilds—churchyards and clergymen miles away,—but I took my Prayer-book with me, and said over him the texts and prayers out of the Burial Service; for I thought of you, Helen, and I knew you would like him to be buried as if he was at home. Then I sat down and thought about coming to England and to you; but a disagreeable idea had crept into my mind. ‘Now that Henry Clinton is gone,’ I said to myself, ‘Helen will have Mrs. Ross’s property after all. Suppose she should think that has anything to do with my going back?’ A long time I sat ruminating by the boy’s grave, till the sun went down, and it began to get damp and cold, and then I went home. But I couldn’t sleep all that night, and for many nights after, the thought worried me so much. At last I could bear it no longer, and I flung it from me, and made up my mind to come home at once in spite of it. ‘My own conscience is quite clear upon the point,’ I said to myself. ‘I hope I shall never stoop to such meanness as that; and if Helen thinks me capable of it, I must try to persuade her that she is wrong.’ But I don’t think she will.”

His eyes turned inquiringly towards her as he finished, and she put her hand in his.

“No, John,” she said, “such an idea would never have entered my head. If I had not trusted you too much to think of such a thing for a moment, I should not have promised to be Helen Locksley.”

HAPPINESS.

DREAM of sweet summer! vision of delight!
 Filling with radiance life's unquiet night;
 Smiling with sunlit gleam on all below
 Of joy which earth can give or heaven bestow.

Spirit of peace, unfold thy golden wings,
 To shudder over all created things;
 Fling thou the blessing from thine outstretch'd hand
 In showers upon the thirsty, sin-stain'd land,

Where many a wanderer, tired and tempest-toss'd,
 Starts to a sense of all that he has lost;
 Sudden and sharp the arrow onward glides,
 And in the wounded, waken'd heart it hides.

Wounded by sin—torn by its deadly force—
 Lured by its lies to agonized remorse,
 Till far away the happy past appears,
 Hidden, it may be, by a storm of tears!

Hidden for ever, seen but in our dreams,
 Where all we feel unsatisfying seems,
 While sullen, with its sad and gloomy eye,
 The shadow of the future passes by.

Youth may be happy; but the touch of care
 Has often left its impress even there.
 E'en happy childhood's untried trusting heart
 To sorrow's sting has learn'd sometimes to start.

Yes! with but few exceptions, over all
 The curtain of unhappiness will fall;
 But those must suffer most whose wilful choice
 Has been to listen to the tempter's voice,—

That syren voice, which with its lovely lies
 Has taught the proud their birthright to despise;
 To grasp the fleeting, perishable toys,
 Which earth so freely gives and time destroys.

Nothing is stable—nought of earth can last;
 All that we care for vanishes so fast;
 And slowly, sadly, does conviction come
 That we have wander'd far away from home.

Home! in the music of that one sweet word
What wealth of happiness for man is stored!
Home here may be a rest from sin and strife,
But home in heaven is everlasting life.

And all may turn there from destruction's brink,
And into life eternal all may drink;
The reckless sinner on his downward road
May still return in penitence to God.

Yes; it is not too late. Before our eyes
Our loving Lord in love still holds the prize;
His strong, kind voice is speaking still for heaven,
To tell thee, sinner, that thou art forgiven!

No hand can tear thee from His loving breast,
Who bids thee come, in Him to find thy rest;
Pardon'd for Jesus' sake—thy pardon see,
Seal'd in His blood, who freely died for thee.
